The New Testament

A New Translation

by OLAF M. NORLIE

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by

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In Modern English for Today's Reader

with

THE PSALMS FOR TODAY
A New Translation in Current English
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PREFACE

DR. NORLIE'S purpose, in preparing this new translation from the original Greek, has been to make the language of the New Testament more interesting and intelligible, especially for today's young people who are not familiar with many of the obscure, archaic and complicated terms used in other and older versions.

Particular attention has been given to make this translation *readable*, while at the same time making it *meaningful*—combining clarity and simplicity with a pleasing English style, thus gaining a simple and graceful eloquence so often lacking in modern-speech translations.

These are some of the things kept in mind to achieve this goal:

It tries to use the simpler words, wherever there is a choice.

It shortens the sentences wherever possible.

It omits the solemn style, now no longer used except in the pulpit.

It capitalizes all the names and personal pronouns referring to Deity.

It retains the versification of the Authorized (King James) Bible, without allowing verse numbers to be obtrusive.

It groups the verses according to content, with subject headings supplied for each portion, for convenience in reading and study.

This fresh new version of the New Testament will appeal to young and old alike because of its wonderful readability. At the same time it preserves the gracefulness and dignity of style so long associated with the traditional King James (Authorized) Version.

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THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

CHAPTER 1

The Ancestry of Jesus Christ

THE ancestral table of Jesus Christ, Son of David, Son of Abraham: [2]Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac of Jacob, and Jacob of Judah and his brothers. [3]Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez of Hezron, and Hezron of Ram. [4]Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab of Nahson, and Nahson of Salmon. [5]Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz of Obed by Ruth, and Obed of Jesse. [6]And Jesse was the father of David, the king.

King David was the father of Solomon by Uriah's wife, [7]Solomon of Rehoboam, Rehoboam of Abijah, and Abijah of Asa. [8]Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat of Joram, and Joram of Uzziah. [9]Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham of Ahaz, and Ahaz of Hezekiah. [10]Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh of Amon, and Amon of Josiah. [11]Josiah was the father of Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the Babylonian captivity.

12 And after the Babylonian captivity, Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel of Zerubbabel. [13]Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud, Abiud of Eliakim, and Eliakim of Azor. [14]Azor was the father of Sadoc, Sadoc of Achim, and Achim of Eliud. [15]Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar of Matthan, and Matthan of Jacob. [16]And Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ.

17 So, all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen; and from David to the Babylonian captivity, fourteen; and from the Babylonian captivity to the Christ, fourteen.

The Virgin Birth

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ happened in this way: His mother, Mary, had been engaged to Joseph, but before

they were married she was found to be expecting a Child, by the Holy Spirit. [19]Joseph, her husband-to-be, was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public shame. He had in mind, therefore, to release her secretly. [20]While he was still thinking about these things, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, you must not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the expected Child within her is by the Holy Spirit. [21]She shall give birth to a Son and you shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

22 Now all this had happened in fulfillment of what the Lord had spoken by the prophet *(Isaiah 7:14),* namely, [23]"The virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel, which literally means, God with us."

24 When Joseph awoke from his sleep, he did as the Lord commanded him, and married her. [25]Yet he did not live with her as a husband until she had given birth to her first-born Son, whom he named Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

The Childhood of Jesus

WHEN Jesus was born at Bethlehem, in Judea, there came to Jerusalem from the East, wise men, who began to ask, [2]"Where is He who was born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

3 When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him. [4]So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes and wanted to know of them where the Christ was to be born. [5]They told him, "In Bethlehem, in Judea, for so it has been recorded by the prophet: [6]'And you, Bethlehem in Judah, are by no means least among the princes of Judah, for out of you shall come forth a Leader who shall be like a shepherd of my people Israel' " *(Micah 5:2).*

7 Herod then secretly called in the wise men and wanted
them to tell him the exact time in which the star had ap-
peared. [8]After that, he sent them on to Bethlehem, saying,
"Go! Find out all you can about the Child, and then when
you have found Him, bring word back to me so that I, too,
may go and worship Him."

9 And they, having heard the king's wishes, went on their
way. And lo! the star that they had seen in the East went
before them till it came to the place where the Child was,
and stood over it. [10]The wise men, watching the star, were
filled with great joy.

11 They went into the house and found the Child with
Mary, His mother. They fell down and worshiped Him. They
opened their treasures and gave Him gifts — gold, incense
and fragrant myrrh. [12]Then, forewarned in a dream not to
go back to Herod, they left for their country by another way.

13 Hardly had they departed when an angel appeared in
a dream to Joseph, and said, "Get up! Take the child and
His mother and flee to Egypt. And stay there till I call you,
for Herod is about to seek the Child, to destroy Him. [14]He
got up, took the Child and His mother, and left that night for
Egypt. [15]There he remained till Herod's death, in fulfillment
of the Lord's words by the prophet, who had said, "Out of
Egypt I called my son" (*Hosea* 11:1).

16 When Herod saw that the wise men had made a fool of
him, he was greatly enraged, and sent men to put to death
all the little boys in Bethlehem and the whole neighborhood
who were two years old and under, based on the time which,
through careful inquiry, he had learned from the wise men.
[17]Then were fulfilled the words of the prophet Jeremiah, who
had said, [18]"A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and great
mourning; Rachel, bewailing her children and would not be
comforted, because they were dead" (*Jeremiah* 31:15).

19 Then, when Herod died, an angel of the Lord came to
Joseph in Egypt in a dream. [20]He said, "Get up! Take the
Child and His mother and go back to the land of Israel,

for those who were seeking the child's life have died." [21]So he arose, took the Child and His mother, and set out for the land of Israel. [22]But when he heard that Archelaus had succeeded his father, Herod, as king in Judea, he was afraid to go there. The Lord then told him in a dream what to do. This he did; he withdrew to the region of Galilee. [23]Having come there, he settled down in a town named Nazareth, thus fulfilling the word of the prophets that He should be called a Nazarene (*Isaiah* 11:1; *Jeremiah* 23:5; *Zechariah* 3:8, 6:12 — from *Nezer,* Hebrew word for Branch).

CHAPTER 3

The Forerunner of the Messiah

THE time arrived when John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the wilderness of Judea. [2]"Repent!" he said, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." [3]This is the man who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "Hark! A voice is heard in the wilderness crying out, 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make His paths straight!' " (*Isaiah* 40:3).

4 John wore clothing made of camels' hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he had locusts and wild honey.

The Promise of the Messiah

5 Then Jerusalem went out to him, as well as all Judea and all the country around the Jordan. [6]Those who confessed their sins were baptized by him in the Jordan. [7]When he observed that many Pharisees and Sadducees were coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? [8]Then bring forth fruit proving that you are penitent! [9]And don't think that you can get by with saying, 'We have Abraham as father,' for God is able, I am telling you, to make children for Abraham out of these stones.

10 "Yes, even now the axe is being applied to the root
of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that does not bear good
fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. 11I baptize
you with water for repentance, but the One who comes after
me is so far above me that I am not fit to carry his sandals.
He will baptize you with the Spirit and with fire. 12In His
hand He is holding His fan, and He will cleanse His thresh-
ing floor. He will put His wheat into His granary, but He
will burn the chaff in unquenchable fire."

The Baptism of the Messiah

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan,
to be baptized by Him. 14But John hesitated, saying, "I
ought to be baptized by You; then why do You come to me?"
15Jesus answered, "Do it now, for it is right that we thus
fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

16 When Jesus had been baptized, He came out of the
water at once, and see! the heaven was opened, and He saw
the Spirit of God coming down like a dove, and resting on Him.
17And a voice out of heaven spoke, "This is My Son, the
Beloved. I am well pleased with Him."

CHAPTER 4

The Temptation

WHEN Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wil-
derness to be tested by the Devil 2He spent forty days and
forty nights there, fasting, after which He was very hungry.
3Then the Tempter came near and said, "If You are the
Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." 4But He
said in reply, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread
alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of
God' " (*Deut.* 8:3).

5 Next, the Devil took Him to the Holy City, and set
Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said, 6"If You are

God, jump down, for it is written: 'He has commanded His angels to look after You, and they will hold You up in their hands so that Your foot shall not strike against a stone' " (*Psalm* 91:11, 12). [7]Jesus answered him, "It is also written: 'You shall not tempt the Lord, your God' " (*Deut.* 6:16).

8 Once more the Devil took Him — this time to the top of a very high mountain — and he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor, and said to Him, [9]"I will give You all of these, if You will fall down and worship me." [10]Then Jesus said to him, "Go! Away with you, Satan! for it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord, your God, and you shall serve Him only' " (*Deut.* 6:13). [11]Then the Devil left Him, and angels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus in Galilee

12 When Jesus had heard that John had been put into prison, He went up to Galilee. [13]And then, leaving Nazareth, He went to live in Capernaum, which is by the sea of Galilee, and on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. [14]Thus the words spoken by the prophet Isaiah were to come true: [15]"Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, along the road to the sea, this side of the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: [16]This people sitting in darkness saw a great Light; a Light dawned on those who dwelt in the land and in the shadow of death" (*Isaiah* 8:22-9:2).

17 From that time on, Jesus began to preach saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

18 As He walked by the Sea of Galilee He saw two brothers — Simon, also called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, about to cast a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. [19]He talked to them. "Come with me," He said, "and I will make you fishers of men." [20]They abandoned their nets immediately and followed Him.

21 And as they went on farther He saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in a boat together with Zebedee their father, mending their nets;

and He called them. [22]And they, too, at once left their boat and their father, and followed Him.

23 So Jesus went about in all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues and preaching the glad tidings of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every infirmity among the people. [24]His fame spread even into all of Syria, and the people brought to Him all who were sick, afflicted with various diseases and sufferings, also demoniacs, lunatics and paralytics, and He healed them.

25 Great crowds followed Him from Galilee and Decapolis, from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

CHAPTER 5

The Sermon on the Mount — The Beatitudes

WHEN Jesus saw the crowds, He went up on a mountain and sat down, and then His disciples came to Him. [2]Then He talked to them and taught them thus:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after uprightness, for they will get their fill.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who endure persecution on account of doing right, for the kingdom of heaven is theirs.

11 "Blessed are you when men scoff at you and persecute you, and keep on telling lies about you on My account. [12]Be glad! Rejoice greatly, for your reward in heaven will also

be great. It was this way, too, when they persecuted the prophets in days gone by.

The Salt and the Light

13 "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, how can it become salty again? Then it is good for nothing but to be thrown away and trampled under foot.

14 "You are the light of the world. A city on a mountain cannot be hidden. 15Men do not light a lamp and put it under a bushel basket, but on a table, and then it gives light to everyone in the house. 16Just so, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your heavenly Father.

The Law not Repealed

17 "You must not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets. I have not come to abolish, but to fulfill. 18And I tell you for a fact that until heaven and earth shall be no more, not the smallest letter, nor even a part of a letter, shall be dropped from the Law until it is all fulfilled. 19So, if anyone breaks one of the least of its commands and teaches others to do likewise, he will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but anyone who obeys the Law and teaches others to do so will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20And I say that unless you are far more upright than the scribes and Pharisees, you will not get into the kingdom of heaven at all.

Anger and Murder

21 "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not murder.' 22But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother shall have to answer in court, and whoever speaks to his brother in words of contempt shall have to answer in the highest court; and whosoever shall call him a fool shall be liable to hell fire. 23If, when you are about to offer your gift at the altar, you then remember

that your brother has something against you, — [24]stop! Leave your gift right there before the altar. Then go and first make peace with your brother, after which you may come back and present your gift.

25 "When you are on the way to court with an opponent at law, hasten to come to terms with him, lest he shall turn you over to the judge and the judge turn you over to the officer, and you land in jail. [26]I tell you truly that you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

Impurity

27 "You have heard it said to the men of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' [28]But I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. [29]So, if your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one member of your body than to have your whole body cast into hell. [30]And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away from you; for it is better for you to lose one member of your body than to have your whole body cast into hell.

The Sacredness of Marriage

31 "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife must give her a letter of divorce.' [32]But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife for any reason other than adultery causes her to commit adultery, and whoever marries the woman who has been divorced, commits adultery.

Simplicity of Speech

33 "Again, you have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but you shall fulfill your sacred promises as before the Lord.' [34]But I tell you, don't swear at all, either by heaven, for it is God's throne, [35]nor by the earth, for it is His footstool. Nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. [36]Nor swear by your own

head, for you cannot make a single hair either white or black. [37]When you speak, let it be enough when you say plainly, 'Yes,' or 'No.' Anything beyond this is evil.

Revenge

38 "You have heard it said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' [39]But I tell you not to get into a fight with anyone who injures you. Rather, if one hits you on your right cheek, then turn the other cheek to him, too. [40]If someone wants to sue you to get your coat, give him also your overcoat. [41]And if anyone should compel you to go one mile, go two miles with him. [42]Give to him who begs from you, and don't turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.

Loving Our Enemies

43 "You have heard it was said, 'You must love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' [44]But I say that you must love your enemies and pray for your persecutors. [45]In that way you will be sons of your heavenly Father, for He makes His sun to rise on both bad and good people, and makes the rain fall on both the righteous and unrighteous alike. [46]For if you love only those who love you, what will you gain by that? Don't even the tax collectors do as much? [47]And if you greet no one except your own people, does that give you any special distinction? Don't the heathen do the same? [48]You must become spiritually mature, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

CHAPTER 6

Hidden Good Deeds

"SEE to it that you do not do your good deeds before men, so as to be seen by them. If you do, you will not get any reward from your heavenly Father. [2]So, if you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet about it as the

hypocrites do, both in the churches and on the streets, to get praise from men. I tell you, that is their whole reward. [3]Rather, when you give to the poor, let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing. [4]Thus, your charity will be a secret, but your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.

Christian Praying

5 "And again, when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they like to pray in the churches and on the street corners, so as to be seen of men. I tell you truly, that is their only reward. [6]But when you pray, go into the bedroom and shut the door, then pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father, who sees in secret, will answer you.

7 "And, in praying, don't just babble words like the heathen, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. [8]No, don't be like them, for your Father surely knows what you need even before you ask Him.

9 "This, then, is the way you should pray:

'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. [10]Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. [11]Give us today our daily bread, [12]and forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors; [13]and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and power, and glory for ever, Amen!'

Christian Forgiveness

14 "For if you forgive others their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. [15]But if you don't forgive others their offenses, then your heavenly Father will not forgive you your offenses, either.

Christian Fasting

16 "When you fast, don't be like the hypocrites—gloomy, with disfigured faces, trying to make it show that they are fasting. [17]Rather, when you fast, anoint your head and wash

your face, [18]so that you do not fast just to be seen of men, but that you may be seen of our heavenly Father, who is unseen. And your Father, who sees the unseen, will reward you.

True Riches

19 "Don't lay up for yourselves treasures here on earth where moths and rust destroy, and where thieves break through and steal. [20]But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break through and steal. [21]For your heart will be where your treasure is.

22 "The eye is the lamp of the body. Then, if you have a good eye, your whole body will have light. [23]But if you have poor eyesight, then your whole body will be in darkness, and how dense that darkness will be!

24 "No man can serve two masters, for he will either hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold fast to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money at the same time.

The Cares of Life

25 "I say, therefore, don't be concerned about your life, as to what you should eat and drink, nor about your body, as to what you should wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than dress? [26]Look at the birds in the sky! They do not sow or reap, or gather food into the storehouses, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they?

27 "Now, which of you, by worrying, can add a foot to his height? [28]And why do you worry about clothes? Look at the lilies of the field! See how they grow! They do not toil, nor do they spin. [29]But I tell you that Solomon in all his glory was not clothed as one of these. [30]But if God so marvelously colors the grass of the field, which is green today but tomorrow is dry and thrown into the fire, will He not more surely clothe you — you of so little faith?

31 "Don't be worried, then, about what you will have to
eat, and what you will have to drink, and what you will have
to wear. 32For the heathen are striving hard to get these very
things, all of which your heavenly Father knows well you
need. 33Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and
all these other things will be yours in addition. 34You
shouldn't be anxious, then, about tomorrow, for tomorrow
will have its own problems. Each day has enough troubles
of its own."

CHAPTER 7

Judgment of Others

"DON'T be finding fault with others and they
will not be finding fault with you. 2For you will be criti-
cized in exactly the same way that you pass judgment, and
it will be measured back to you just as you measure it out
to others. 3Just why do you take notice of a speck in your
brother's eye, but are not concerned about the stick in your
own eye? 4Or why do you say to your brother, 'Let me re-
move the speck from your eye,' when you have a stick in
your own eye? 5You hypocrite! Pull out the stick from your
own eye first, then you can see better to take out the speck
from your brother's eye!

6 "You must not give holy things to dogs, nor cast your
pearls before wild hogs. They might turn on you and tear
you to pieces.

Encouragement to Prayer

7 "Ask, and it will be given unto you. Seek, and you will
find. Knock, and it will be opened to you. 8For everyone
who asks will receive, and everyone who seeks will find,
and everyone who knocks will have the door opened to
him. 9Or is there any one of you who would give your son
a stone if he should ask you for bread? 10Or in case he
should ask you for a fish, would you then give him a snake?

11Well then, if you —although you are evil — know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good things to those who keep on asking Him?

The "Golden Rule"

12 "So, whatever you want people to do for you, do likewise for them, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

The Two Roads

13 "Go in through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and they are many, indeed, who go through the gate. 14But the gate that leads to life is small, and the way is narrow, and there are few who find it.

Warning Against False Teachers

15 "Be on the lookout for false prophets who come to you dressed up like sheep, but at heart they are like devouring wolves. 16You can recognize them by their fruits. Do men pick grapes from thorn trees, or figs from thistles? No! 17The fact is that every good tree bears good fruit, whereas a rotten tree produces poor fruit. 18A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, and a poor tree cannot produce good fruit. 19Every tree that does not produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20Yes, you can recognize them by their fruits.

21 "Not every one who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will get into the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name? And drive out demons in Your name? And do many miracles in Your name?' 23And then I will say to them very plainly, 'I have never known you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!'

The Two Foundations

24 "Every one, therefore, who hears these sayings of Mine

and obeys them, will be like a wise man who built his house on a stone foundation. [25]And the rain fell, and the river rose, and the winds howled and beat against that house, and yet it didn't fall, for it was built on rock. [26]But, on the other hand, every one who hears these sayings of Mine, but doesn't follow them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. [27]And the rain fell, and the river rose, and the winds howled and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

28 When Jesus had ended His sermon, the crowds were much astonished at His teaching. [29]For He did not teach them as their own scribes, but as One who had authority.

CHAPTER 8

The Healing of the Leper

WHEN Jesus came down from the mountain He was followed by great crowds. [2]A leper came up to Him, fell on his knees and cried, "Lord, if You want to, You can heal me!" [3]Jesus stretched out His arm and touched him, and said, "I will. Be clean!" And at once he was cured of his leprosy. [4]Then Jesus said to him, "Tell no one, but go and show yourself to the priest, and as a witness to them offer the gift that Moses has commanded" (*Lev.* 14:3).

Healing of the Centurion's Servant

5 When He came back to Capernaum, a captain of the Roman army came up to Him and said to Him imploringly, [6]"Lord, my son is sick in bed, paralyzed, and in great pain." [7]Jesus said to him, "I will come over and heal him." [8]The captain replied, "I am not worthy, Lord, to have You come under my roof. But speak only a word of command and my son will be healed. [9]For though I am a man who has to take orders, I have soldiers under me, and when I say to

one, 'Go!' he goes, and to another, 'Come!' he comes, and to my servant, 'Do this!' and he does it."

10 When Jesus heard this, He was amazed and said to His followers, "Indeed, I tell you, that not even in Israel have I found so great faith. 11And I tell you that many will come from the East and the West, and they will sit down to feast with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, 12but the sons of the kingdom shall be put out into the outer darkness, and there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

13 Jesus then said to the captain, "Go, and be it to you as you have believed!" And the boy was healed that very hour.

Healing of Peter's Mother-in-Law, and Others

14 When He came to Peter's house, Jesus saw Peter's wife's mother lying down sick with fever. 15Then he touched her hand and the fever left her, and she got up and waited on Him.

16 In the evening, they brought Him many who were possessed by demons, and with a word He drove out the evil spirits, and all who were ill He made well again. 17In this way He fulfilled the words of the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities upon Himself, and took away our diseases" (*Isaiah* 53:4).

Tests of Sincerity

18 Jesus, seeing the great crowds around Him, then gave orders to cross over to the far side of the lake. 19At this, a scribe came to Him and said, "I will go with You, Teacher, wherever You want to go." 20Jesus answered Him, "Foxes have holes and birds in the air have roosts, but the Son of Man has not a place where He can rest His head.

21 Another man — one of His followers — said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." 22But Jesus answered him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead!"

The Stilling of the Storm

23 He then went into a boat, and His disciples came in
after Him. 24A terrific storm came upon them, and the waves
dashed over the boat, but He was asleep. 25His disciples
went over to Him and awakened Him, crying out, "Save us,
Lord! We shall perish!" 26He said to them, "Why are you
afraid, you of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the
sea, and there was a great calm. 27And the men, dumb-
founded, said, "What kind of Man is this, for both the winds
and the waves obey Him?"

Healing of the Gadarene Maniacs

28 When He had reached the other side, the land of the
Gadarenes, He met two demon-possessed men who were just
then coming out of the tombs. They were so violent that
nobody could pass that way. 29Then, all at once, they set
up a cry, "What do You want of us, You Jesus, Son of God?
Have you come here to torment us before our appointed
time?"

30 Now there was, quite some distance from them, a
large drove of pigs feeding. 31The demons then entreated
Him, saying, "If You are going to drive us out, let us go
into the drove of pigs." 32He answered them, "Go!" And
they left the men and went into the animals. But suddenly
the whole drove of pigs rushed down the slope into the sea,
and they drowned there in the water.

33 Those who fed the pigs then fled, and came back to
town and told everything, also what happened to the men
who had the evil spirits. 34The whole town then turned out
to meet Jesus, but on seeing Him, they begged Him to go
away from their countryside.

CHAPTER 9

Healing of the Paralytic

HE AGAIN got into the boat, crossed over the lake and came back to His own city. 2Some men brought to Him a man lying on a stretcher, paralyzed. When Jesus perceived their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, have courage. Your sins are forgiven." 3Some of the scribes then said to themselves, "This man is a blasphemer." 4But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? 5Now, which is the easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? 6But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority here on earth to forgive sins," He said to the paralytic, "Get up! Take your pallet and go back home!" 7And he got up and went home. 8As the crowds saw this happen, they were awe-stricken, and praised God who had given men such power.

Calling Publicans and Sinners

9 As Jesus went farther along, He noticed a man sitting at the tax office, Matthew by name, and He said to him, "Follow me!" And he got up and followed Him. 10Then, while Jesus sat at table in Matthew's home, many tax-collectors and notorious sinners came and sat down with Jesus and His disciples. 11When the Pharisees saw this, they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax-collectors and men of bad repute?" 12Jesus overheard it, and replied, "People who are well don't need a doctor, but those who are sick. 13Go, then, and try to understand this saying. 'What I delight in is mercy, not sacrifice.' And I have not come to call the guiltless to repentance, but the sinful."

John's Disciples Ask About Fasting

14 The disciples of John (the Baptist) came to Jesus and asked, "Why is it that we and the Pharisees fast often, but

your disciples don't fast at all?" 15Jesus answered, "Can a wedding party be in mourning as long as the bridegroom is present? No! But there will come a day when the bridegroom will have been taken from them. Then they will fast. 16Also, no one sews a piece of new cloth onto an old garment, for the patch may tear the garment and a worse rent is made. 17Nor does anyone put new wine into old wineskins, for the skins may burst and the wine run out, and the wine-skins be made unfit. New wine is put into new wineskins; thus both are preserved."

Two Victories of Faith

18 While He was yet talking to them, a ruler came up to Him, prostrated himself, and said, "My daughter has just now died. Won't You come and lay your hand on her, so she will come back to life?" 19Jesus got up and followed him, and so did His disciples. 20At this, a woman who had suffered twelve years from a hemorrhage approached Him from behind and touched the edge of His robe. 21For she said to herself, "If I can only touch His garment, I shall be healed." 22Then, Jesus, turning, saw her and spoke to her, "Daughter, be of good cheer! Your faith has made you well." And from that very hour, the woman was well. 23When Jesus came into the ruler's home, He saw the flute players and the crowd making an uproar. 24He spoke to them, "Go! Leave! For the girl is not dead, but is sleeping." They just laughed at Him. 25Then, after He had sent the people out, He went in and took the girl by the hand, and she got up. 26And this news spread out into all the land.

Healing of Two Blind Men

27 As Jesus was passing along from there, He was followed by two blind men who kept crying and saying, "Take pity on us, O Son of David!" 28But He went into the house and the blind men followed after Him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I can do this?" They answered

Him, "Yes, Lord." [29]Then He touched their eyes and said, "Be it to you according to your faith!" [30]Then their eyes were opened. Jesus ordered them sternly not to let anyone know about it. [31]But when they left Him, they made it known throughout that whole countryside.

Healing of the Dumb Demoniac

32 Hardly had they left Him when there was brought to Him a man who was dumb, and who had a demon. [33]As soon as the demon was driven out of him, the man talked. And the people were astonished and said, "Never has anything like this been seen in Israel." [34]The Pharisees, however, said, "He casts out devils with the help of the prince of demons."

Preaching and Healing in Galilee

35 Thereupon Jesus went on into all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Good News of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and bodily weakness. [36]As Jesus looked upon the crowds that came, He was filled with compassion for them because they were distressed and needy, like sheep without a shepherd. [37]He said to His disciples, "The harvest is truly great, but the workmen are few. [38]Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send out workmen into His harvest."

CHAPTER 10

The Call and Commission of the Twelve Apostles

AFTER He had called His twelve disciples, He gave them power to cast out evil spirits, and also power to heal every sickness and weakness. [2]These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, called Peter, and Andrew, his brother; then James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother; [3]Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew, the tax-collector; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus,

who was surnamed Thaddeus; [4]Simon, the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

5 It was these twelve whom Jesus sent out after having given them orders, saying, "Do not go to the heathen, and do not go to any Samaritan town. [6]But, rather, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. [7]Go and preach! Say, 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' [8]Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. Freely you have received; freely give.

9 "Don't take along any gold or silver or other money in your pocketbooks. [10]And no provision bag for your journey, no extra coat, no shoes, and no staff. A laborer has a right to his support.

11 "When you come to a town or village, look up some worthy person and stay with him until you leave again. [12]And as you go into his house, wish it well. [13]And if the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it. But if unworthy, let your peace return to you. [14]And wherever they will not welcome you or listen to your message, as you leave that house or town, shake its very dust from your feet. [15]I tell you for sure that, on the day of judgment, the land of Sodom and Gomorrah will fare better than that town.

16 "Yes, I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore, you must be wise as serpents, yet innocent as doves. [17]Don't put your trust in men, for they will hand you over to the courts, and they will flog you in their synagogues. [18]And they will drag you before governors and kings because of Me, so that you may bear witness before them and before the heathen.

19 "Now, when they treat you thus, remember not to be anxious about how or what you will say, for words will be given you when that time comes. [20]Indeed, it will not be you who will speak then, but the Spirit of your Father who will speak in you.

21 "Then brothers will deliver up their brothers, and fathers their children. Children will rise up against their

parents and will put them to death. [22]And you will be hated by all men because you bear My name. Nevertheless, he who holds out to the end shall be saved.

23 "If they persecute you in one town, take refuge in a different one. And I promise you that before you have completed the round of the cities of Israel, the Son of Man will return.

24 "A disciple is not higher than his teacher, nor is a servant higher than his master. [25]It should be enough for a disciple to be like his teacher, or a servant to be like his master. If men have called the master of the house Beelzebul, how much better would that fit the members of the household? [26]So, don't be afraid. There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, and not a secret that will not be known. [27]Now, what I am saying to you in the darkness of night you are to tell in the light of day, and what has been whispered in your ear you must proclaim from the housetops.

28 "There are some who can kill the body, but not the soul. Do not fear them at all. But rather fear Him who can destroy both body and soul in hell. [29]Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them can fall to the ground without your Father's will. [30]And as for you, even the hairs of your head are all counted. [31]So, stop being afraid. You are worth more than many sparrows.

32 "Therefore, everyone who confesses Me before men I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. [33]But whoever denies Me before men I will also deny before My Father in heaven.

34 "Don't think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. [35]I came to set a man against his father and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. [36]A man's enemies will thus be his own family. [37]One who loves his father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me, and one who loves his son or daughter more than Me is not

worthy of Me. [38]Likewise, one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. [39]He who has found life shall lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake shall find it again.

40 "He who welcomes you, welcomes Me, and he who welcomes Me, welcomes Him who sent Me. [41]He who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will get a prophet's reward, and he who welcomes a righteous man because he is a righteous man will get a righteous man's reward. [42]And anyone who will give to one of these little ones a cup of cold water to drink, in the name of a disciple, I tell you that he surely shall not lose his reward."

CHAPTER 11

John the Baptist Asks Questions About Jesus

WHEN Jesus had finished giving instructions to His twelve disciples, He went on to teach and preach in the towns around there.

2 Meanwhile, John had heard in prison about the work of the Christ, and now sent two of his disciples to ask him, [3]"Are You the coming One, or must we look for another?" [4]Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see. [5]The blind see, the lame walk, lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead are raised and the Good News is preached to the poor. [6]Blessed is the man who does not take offense at me."

Jesus' Testimony About John

7 As they were about to leave, Jesus began to say to the crowds in regard to John, "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? [8]No? Then what did you go out to look at? A man dressed in fine clothes? Well, those in fine clothing are in the palaces of kings. [9]Then, just what did you expect to see? A prophet?

Oh yes, I tell you, one who was much more than a prophet.
10For this is the man of whom Scripture says, 'Attention! I
am sending My messenger before you, who will prepare
Your road ahead of You!' (*Malachi* 3:1). 11Believe Me, no
greater son of woman has ever arisen than John the Bap-
tist, and yet the lesser ones in the kingdom of heaven are
greater than he. 12From the days of John the Baptist until
now the kingdom of heaven has been taken by force — those
using force to seize it. 13For all the prophets and the Law
kept prophesying until John. 14And — if you are willing to
accept it — he is the Elijah who was to come. 15He who
has ears to hear, take heed.

Judgment Upon Galilean Cities

16 "To what shall I compare the people of today? They
are like children sitting in the market place calling out to
their playmates, 17'We played the flute to you, but you would
not dance. Then we wailed to you, but you did not play
mourners.' 18They say about John, a strict man who neither
ate nor drank with you, 'He is demon-possessed.' 19Then
came the Son of Man, eating like others, and they say,
'Look! He is a glutton and drunkard, a companion of tax-
collectors and sinners.' Well, wisdom is justified by her
works."

20 Then He began to reproach the cities in which most
of His miracles had taken place, because they had not re-
pented. 21"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!
For if the mighty works which have taken place in you had
taken place long ago in Tyre and Sidon, they would have
repented in sackcloth and ashes. 22I tell you this: on the
day of judgment it will be easier for Tyre and Sidon than
for you.

23 "And you, Capernaum, were you not exalted to
heaven? You shall be brought as low as death! Even Sodom
would have stood to this day if the miracles that have been
performed in you had been performed there. 24I say, there-

fore, that it will be easier for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Jesus' Assertion of His Deity

25 At that time, Jesus revealed His thoughts by saying, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank You for having kept these things concealed from wise and learned men, and that you have made them clear to little children. [26]Even so, Father, for it was well-pleasing to You.

27 "Everything has been entrusted to Me by My Father. No one knows the Son clearly except the Father, and no one understands the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son may choose to reveal Him.

28 "Come to me, all you who toil and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. [29]Fit My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble-minded, and you will find rest for your souls. [30]For My yoke fits so easily that My burden is light."

CHAPTER 12

The Sabbath Question

ONCE, as Jesus was going through a grain field on a sabbath, His disciples, being hungry, began to pluck the heads of grain and to eat them. [2]The Pharisees observed this and they spoke to Him. "Look! Your disciples are doing something not lawful to do on the sabbath." [3]He replied, "Have you not read what David did when he and his men were hungry? [4]How he entered the house of God and there ate the holy bread which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests? [5]And have you not also read in the Law that on the sabbath the priests, too, break the sabbath in the temple and yet are held guiltless? [6]I want to tell you that One greater than the temple is here. [7]And if you had understood what is meant by the saying,

'It is mercy, not offerings, that I want' (*Hosea* 6:6), you would not have condemned the guiltless. 'For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath."

Healing of the Withered Hand and the Blind Mute

9 So He left them and went into their synagogue. [10]There was a man there who had a withered hand, so, to get something against Him they asked Him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath?" [11]To this He answered, "If one of you has a sheep which happens to fall into a pit on the sabbath, will you not lay hold of it and pull it out? [12]A man is surely worth far more than a sheep. So it is lawful to do good on the sabbath." [13]Then He said to the man, "Hold out your hand." And he held it out and it became as well as the other. [14]The Pharisees then went out and met in council against Him, plotting as to how they might destroy Him.

15 Jesus knew this and left the place, followed by great crowds, and He healed them all. [16]But He gave strict orders that they should not advertise Him in public. [17]This was in fulfillment of what the prophet Isaiah had said might come true, namely, [18]"See my Servant, the Man of my choice, my Beloved, in whom my soul has found delight! I will endow Him with my Spirit and He will proclaim judgment among the nations. [19]He will not wrangle nor make noise; in the streets no one will hear His voice. [20]He will not break a bruised reed, nor will He put out the struggling flame until His judgments have been crowned with victory. [21]And the nations will put their hope in His name' (*Isaiah* 42:1-4).

22 Then they brought to Him a man possessed by a demon. He was also blind and dumb, but He healed him, so that the dumb and blind man could both speak and see. [23]The people were all astounded, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?"

A Kingdom Divided Against Itself

24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This Man

casts out demons only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons."
[25]Jesus knew their thoughts and made reply, "Every kingdom divided against itself faces ruin, and every city or family divided against itself will not stand. [26]Then, if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How, then, will his kingdom stand? [27]Again, if I cast out demons by Beelzebul, by whose help are your own sons casting them out? Let them be your judges! [28]But if the Spirit of God helps Me to cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come to you. [29]How, indeed, can anyone enter a strong man's house and carry off his goods unless the strong man is first bound? Only then can he plunder his house.

The Unpardonable Sin

30 "Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me, scatters. [31]For that reason I warn you that every sin and blasphemy can be forgiven men, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven, either in this world or in the next. [32]Whoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man may get forgiveness, but whoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven either in this world or in the world to come.

The Sin of Idle Words

33 "You must either make the tree good and the fruit good or make the tree bad and the fruit bad, for a tree is known by its fruit. [34]You offspring of vipers, how can you say good things, wicked as you are? For the mouth speaks what the heart contains. [35]A good man, out of the good treasure in his heart, says good things, and a wicked man, out of the wicked things in his heart, says wicked things. [36]I tell you, therefore, that on the day of judgment men will have to give an account for every thoughtless word they have spoken. [37]For it is by your words that you will be acquitted, and it is by your words that you will be condemned."

The Pharisees Want Proof of Jesus' Divinity

38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to Him,
"Teacher, we wish to see a sign from You." 39He replied,
"Only a wicked and adulterous age looks for a sign, but it
shall get no other sign than that of Jonah, the prophet.
40Jonah was three days and three nights in the stomach of
the sea monster, so likewise shall the Son of Man be three
days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41The men
of Nineveh will stand up in judgment against this generation
and will condemn it, for they turned from their sins when
Jonah preached to them, and see! a greater than Jonah is
here. 42The Queen of the South (Sheba) also will rise up
in judgment against this generation and condemn it, for
she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of
Solomon, and see! a greater than Solomon is here.

The Need of Divine Deliverance

43 "When an evil spirit has left a man, he wanders about
in dry places seeking rest, but not finding it. 44Then he
says to himself, 'I will return to my house from whence I
came, and when he comes back, he finds that there is no one
there, but that it has been swept and put in order. 45Out he
goes again, then, and returns with seven other evil spirits
more wicked than himself, and they go in and dwell there.
Thus, the last condition of that man is worse than the first.
Just so will this wicked generation fare also."

The New Relationship

46 While He was still addressing the crowds, His mother
and His brothers came up, but stood outside the throng,
wanting to speak to Him. 47Then someone said to Him,
"Your mother and your brothers are here outside, and want
to talk to You." 48But He answered the man who spoke to
Him, "Who is My mother? And who are My brothers? 49And,
pointing to His disciples, He said, "These are My mother
and my brothers! 50For whoever does the will of My Father
in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

CHAPTER 13

The Story of the Sower

THAT same day Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the seaside. [2]Great numbers of people gathered around Him there, so He went into a boat and sat down, while the crowd stayed on the beach. [3]He told them many things, using stories (parables) to teach them, for example:

4 "A farmer went out to sow, and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the roadside, and the birds came and ate them. [5]And some fell among stones, with not much soil, but they sprang up at once because they did not have depth of earth. [6]As the sun rose, these were scorched, and because they had no deep roots, they dried up. [7]And some fell among thorns, and as the thorns grew up, they choked them. [8]But some fell in good ground and gave fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty and some thirty. [9]Listen! You who have ears to hear with, hear!"

Why Jesus Used Stories (Parables)

10 His disciples came to Him and asked, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" [11]"Because," He answered, "you are privileged to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but they are not so privileged." [12]For if a man has possessions, he will get more until he has more than enough, but if he is poor, even the little that he has will be taken away from him. [13]Therefore, I speak to them in stories (parables), because though they have eyes they do not see, and though they have ears they do not hear; they just don't understand. [14]There is a prophecy in Isaiah which comes to fulfillment in them. He says, 'You hear and hear but do not understand; you look and look but do not perceive. [15]The heart of this people has become fat and stupid; they hardly hear with their ears; they shut their eyes tight. They do not want to see with their eyes nor hear with their ears,

nor understand with their hearts lest they be converted and be healed by Me' (*Isaiah* 6:9-10). [16]But your eyes are blessed, for they do see, and your ears, for they hear. [17]I tell you that many prophets and righteous men have longed to see what you are seeing, but they did not see it, and to hear what you are hearing, but they did not hear it.

The Parable of the Sower Explained

18 "The parable of the sower is, then, for you to hear. [19]When one hears the Word of the kingdom but does not understand it, then the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in the heart. This was the sowing by the wayside. [20]And what was sown in stony ground is like the one who, on hearing the Word, gladly accepts it. [21]But since it has no real root in him, it lasts only a little while. As soon as trials and persecutions come because of the Word, he at once gives it up. [22]Then, as to what was sown among the thorns, that is like one who listens to the Word, but the worries of this life and the love of money choke its message, and it yields nothing. [23]And, lastly, what was sown in good ground stands for those who listen to the Word and understand it, and consequently bear fruit, some as much as a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds

24 He told them another parable. "The kingdom of heaven," He said, "is like a farmer who sowed good seed in his field. [25]But while men slept, some enemy came and scattered seeds of weeds among the wheat, and went away. [26]And when the blade sprouted and produced ears of grain, the weeds also appeared. [27]The farmer's servants then came to him and said, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How comes it, then, that there are also weeds?' [28]'An enemy must have done this,' he replied. The servants then asked Him, 'Shall we go then and weed them out?' [29]'No,' he said, 'because when you pull up the weeds, you may by

chance also uproot the wheat. [30]So let them grow together till harvest time, and when harvest comes, I shall give orders to the reapers to gather up the weeds first, and to bind them in bunches to be burned, and then to gather up the wheat and store it in my granary.' "

The Parable of the Mustard Seed

31 Another parable He told them, as follows: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field. [32]Indeed, it is the smallest of seeds, but when it is grown it is larger than the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the wild birds can come and roost among its branches."

The Parable of the Leaven

33 He gave them still another parable. "The kingdom of heaven," said He, "is like yeast that a woman took and worked it into three measures of flour until the whole batch was leavened."

34 All this Jesus told the crowd in parables. In fact, He taught nothing to them except by parables. [35]This was done in fulfillment of the words of the prophet, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will tell about things kept secret from the beginning of the world" (*Psalm* 78:2). [36]After Jesus had dismissed the multitude and had gone to His house, the disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the story about the weeds in the field."

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

37 So He answered them, "It is the Son of Man who sows the good seed. [38]The field is the world, and the good seed are the sons of the kingdom, whereas the weeds are the sons of the evil one. [39]The enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of time. The reapers are the angels. [40]Just as the weeds are gathered together and burned in fire, so shall it be at the end of the world. [41]The Son of Man will

send out His angels to gather up out of His kingdom every wrongdoer and every cause of sin, 42and they will cast them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43But the righteous in their Father's kingdom will shine forth like the sun. He who has ears to hear with, let him hear.

The Parables of the Precious Treasures

44 "Once more, the kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a man found and hid again. It gave him so much joy that he went and sold everything he had, and then bought that field.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of rare pearls. 46When he came across one that was very precious, he went back and sold everything he had, and bought it.

The Parable of the Net

47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet which was let down into the sea, gathering into it fish of every sort. 48When it was filled, they drew it up on the beach, sat down and sorted out the good fish, but threw the worthless back. 49Thus will it be at the end of time. Angels will come to separate the wicked from the upright. 50And they will cast the wicked into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

51 Jesus asked them, "Have you understood all this?" They said, "Yes, Lord." 52He said to them, "That is the way it should be; every teacher trained in the kingdom of heaven should be like the master of a house who can supply from his storeroom things both old and new."

The Prophet Without Honor

53 When Jesus had spoken these parables, He journeyed on. 54He came into His own neighborhood and taught in the synagogue there, and the people said in surprise, "Where

did this man get such wisdom and power? [55]Is he not the carpenter's son, and is not his mother called Mary? And are not James and Simon and Judah his brothers? [56]And are not all his sisters living here? Then where did this man get all this?" [57]And they felt offended because of Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet has honor everywhere except in his own land and his own home." [58]So He did not perform many miracles there, because of their unbelief.

CHAPTER 14

Death of John the Baptist

AT that time King Herod heard reports about Jesus. [2]He said to his servants, "This must be John the Baptist. He has risen from the dead. That is why miracles are performed by Him." [3]For Herod had taken John and bound him and had put him in prison on account of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. [4]Because John had said to him, "It is unlawful for you to have her." [5]He really wanted to kill him, but he feared the people, for they believed that he was a prophet.

6 Then, as Herod was celebrating his birthday, Herodias' daughter danced at the party and delighted Herod. [7]He then promised her on oath that he would give her anything she might ask. [8]Urged by her mother, she said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist on a platter." [9]The king was shocked, but because of his oath and his dinner guests, he so ordered it. [10]He sent word and had John beheaded in prison. [11]And his head was brought on a platter and given to the girl, and she brought it to her mother. [12]John's disciples went and took his body and buried it. Then they came and told it to Jesus.

13 And when Jesus heard it, He went by boat to a desert place to be by Himself. But people heard of it, and a crowd from the towns followed Him on foot.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

14 When Jesus reached the place, He saw a great throng of people, and He felt sympathy for them and healed their sick.

15 Toward nightfall, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a desert and it is late. Dismiss the crowds so that they can go to the villages and buy themselves food." 16"There is no need to send them away," said Jesus to them. "Give them something to eat." 17They said to Him, "Why, we do not have much here — only five loaves and two fishes." 18Then He said, "Give them to Me." 19Having then ordered the people to sit down on the grass, He took the five loaves and two fishes, and, looking up to heaven, He asked a blessing, broke the loaves, gave them to His disciples, and the disciples in turn served the people. 20Then they all ate and were satisfied, and when they picked up what was left over, they still had twelve baskets full. 21About five thousand men had eaten, besides women and children.

Jesus Walks on the Waves

22 Thereupon He made the disciples get into the boat and cross over to the other side before Him, while He stayed on to dismiss the crowd. 23When He had sent the people away, He went up into the mountain by himself to pray. Night had come. He was there all alone. 24The boat was by this time in the middle of the lake, tossed about by the waves, for the wind was strong.

25 Then, toward daybreak, Jesus went out to them, walking on the sea. 26The disciples were terrified when they saw Him walking on the sea, and they shouted, "It is a ghost!" They cried out with fear. 27Then Jesus at once said to them, "Take courage. Don't be afraid! It is I." 28Peter, answering, exclaimed, "Lord, if it is You, tell me to come to You on the water!" 29Jesus answered, "Come!" and Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water on his way to Jesus.

30But when he noted the fury of the wind he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Save me, Lord!" 31Jesus immediately stretched out His hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith! Why did you doubt?" 32As soon as they reached the boat, the wind quieted down. 33Those in the boat then came to Him in worship, saying, "Truly, You are the Son of God!"

34 Now, having come across the lake, they were in the land of Gennesaret. 35The men there recognized Him and sent word to the whole neighborhood, and they brought Him everyone who was sick. 36They begged Him that they might touch only the edge of His outer garment, and as many as did so were made well.

CHAPTER 15

Jesus Rebukes the Elders

THEN the Pharisees and scribes came up to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, 2"Why do your disciples violate the traditions of our forefathers? For they do not wash their hands before they eat their meal." 3He answered them, "Why do you, yourselves, violate the commandments of God by your traditions? 4For God said, 'Honor your father and your mother' (*Exodus* 20:12), and 'He who curses his father or mother must be put to death' (*Exodus* 21:17). 5But you say that you do not have to honor your father or mother if you give as an excuse, 'What I have that might be of help to you, I have dedicated to God.' 6You have thus by your traditions made worthless the commandments of God. 7You hypocrites! Isaiah spoke about you when he said, 8'This people honor me with their lips but their heart is far from Me. 9And their worship is to no purpose, for they teach doctrines that are only the commandments of men' " (*Isaiah* 29:13).

10 Now, calling the people to Him, He said, "Listen, and take heed!

Outward Appearance vs. Internal Reality

11 "It is not what goes into a man's mouth that defiles
him, but what comes out of it."

12 His disciples then came to Him and said, "Do You
know that the Pharisees took offense at what You just said?"
13He answered, "Every plant that My heavenly Father has
not planted shall be rooted up. 14Leave them alone. They
are only blind leaders of the blind. If one blind man leads
another, they will both fall into the ditch."

15 Peter then said to Him, "Explain this teaching to us."
16He answered, "Don't you — even you — understand? 17Do
you not understand that whatever goes into the mouth
passes into the stomach, and then on until it is eliminated?
18But whatever comes out of the mouth, that comes from
the heart, and that defiles a person. 19Wicked thoughts, mur-
der, adultery, immorality, theft, falsehood, cursing — these
come out of the heart. 20Such things as these defile a man,
whereas eating a meal with unwashed hands does not defile
him."

Healing of the Canaanite Girl

21 Jesus now went away, going back into the districts of
Tyre and Sidon. 22And there was a Canaanite woman from
there who came to Him and said, "Take pity on me, Lord,
Son of David! My daughter has a demon, and is very miser-
able." 23But He did not answer her. His disciples said to
Him, "Send her away, for she keeps on crying after us."
24In reply, He said, "I was not sent to anyone but the lost
sheep of the House of Israel." 25But she came and fell down
before Him, pleading, "Lord, help me!" 26He answered, "It
is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the
dogs." 27But she said, "True, Lord, and yet even the little
dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master's table."
28Then Jesus answered, "O woman, your faith is great! You
shall have what you want." And from that moment her
daughter was healed.

Feeding of the Four Thousand

29 Jesus then went away from there, going back toward
the Sea of Galilee. Then He went up into a mountain and
sat down there. 30Great crowds of people came, bringing
with them the lame, the blind, the deaf, the crippled and
many others. They laid them at His feet and He healed
them. 31As the people noted that the dumb now talked, the
lame walked, and the blind could see, they marveled and
praised the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called His disciples together and said, "I
feel pity for the crowd which has been with Me three days
with nothing to eat. I don't want to send them home fasting,
for fear they might faint on the way." 33But His disciples
said to Him, "Where can we get enough bread here in the
wilderness to satisfy so great a crowd?" 34"How many loaves
do you have?" Jesus asked. They replied, "Seven, and a
few small fishes." 35He then ordered the people to sit down
on the ground. 36And He took the seven loaves and the
fishes, gave thanks, broke them and gave them to His dis-
ciples, and His disciples distributed them to the people.
37Everyone ate and was satisfied. And when they took up the
leftovers they had seven baskets full. 38Four thousand men
were fed, besides women and children. 39Then He dismissed
the crowd, got into a boat and came to the place called
Magadan.

CHAPTER 16

Discerning the Signs of the Times

THE Pharisees and the Sadducees came around
and, to try Him out, they asked Him to show them a sign
from heaven. 2Jesus answered them, "In the evening you
say, 'The weather tomorrow will be fine, for the sky is red.'
3And in the morning you say, 'We shall have a storm today,
for the sky is red and threatening.' Yes, you know how to

read the signs in the heavens, but can't you read the signs of the times? 4A wicked and immoral generation demands a sign, but you will get no other sign than that of the prophet Jonah."

Then He left them and went His way.

Warning Against the Teaching of the Pharisees

5 When the disciples now went to the opposite shore, they forgot to take bread along. 6Jesus said to them, "Look out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!" 7They started to discuss the matter among themselves, saying, "He said this because we didn't take bread along." 8Jesus, observing this, said, "Why are you arguing about not having any bread? O you of little faith! 9Don't you understand? Can you not remember the five thousand fed by the five loaves, and the number of baskets you took up? 10Have you also forgotten the four thousand fed by the seven loaves, and how many baskets you again filled? 11Why can't you see that I was not talking about bread when I warned you to be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Saducees?"

12 Then it dawned on them that He had not told them to beware of the yeast of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

Peter's Confession of Christ

13 As Jesus came into the neighborhood of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people think the Son of Man is?" 14They answered, "Some say John the Baptist, and others Elijah. Still others think He is Jeremiah or another of the prophets."

15 "But as for you," He asked, "Who do you say I am?" 16Simon Peter spoke up, "You are the Christ — the Son of the living God."

17 "And you, Simon, son of Jonah," said Jesus to him, "you are blessed, for no human being has revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.

18 "And now I say to you that you are Peter, and on this
rock I shall build My church, and the powers of death shall
not overthrow it. 19I shall give you the keys to the kingdom
of heaven, and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be
bound in heaven, and whatever you shall make free on earth
shall be freed in heaven." 20He then warned His disciples
to be sure not to tell anyone that He was the Christ.

Jesus Predicts His Death

21 From that time Jesus tried to make it clear to His dis-
ciples that He had to go to Jerusalem to suffer many things
at the hands of the elders, chief priests and scribes, that He
had to be killed but that He would rise again on the third
day. 22Peter, however, took Him aside and protestingly said
to Him, "God forbid! This shall never happen to You,
Lord!" 23But, turning to Peter, He replied, "Get behind me,
Satan! You are an offense to Me, for your thoughts are not
God's thoughts, but man's."

Jesus Calls to Self-renunciation

24 Jesus also said to His disciples, "If anyone wants to
be My disciple, he must deny himself and take up his cross
and follow Me. 25If anyone is anxious to save his life he
will lose it, but if he gives up his life for My sake, he will
find it. 26For what would it benefit a man if he gained the
whole world but lost his own soul? What price would a man
pay as ransom for his soul? 27But the Son of Man will come
in the glory of His Father. He will be accompanied by His
angels, and He will reward each one according to his works.
28Truly I say that some of those standing here will not taste
of death until they shall have seen the Son of Man coming
in His kingdom."

CHAPTER 17

The Transfiguration

SIX days later, Jesus took with Him Peter, James and his brother John, and brought them up to a high mountain to be alone. [2]And He was changed, transfigured, before them. His face shone like the sun and His clothing became as white as the light. [3]And all at once Moses and Elijah came and talked with Him. [4]Peter then said to Jesus, "It is good for us to be here. If You permit it, I shall put up three shrines here—one for You, one for Moses and one for Elijah."

5 While He was still speaking, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them and a voice out of the cloud said, "This is My well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to Him!" [6]When the disciples heard this, they fell on their faces, greatly terrified. [7]Jesus then came to them, touched them and said, "Get up; don't be afraid!"

8 When they looked up, they saw no one there except Jesus.

The Question About Elijah

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus said to them, "Be sure not to tell anyone about the vision — not until the Son of Man shall have risen from the dead." [10]The disciples asked Him, "Why is it that the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" [11]Jesus replied, "Surely Elijah will come first, and he will re-establish things. [12]The fact is that Elijah has already come, but he was not recognized, and they did to him whatever they pleased. In the same way the Son of Man is about to suffer at their hands."

13 The disciples now understood that He had been talking to them about John the Baptist.

Healing of the Lunatic; the Power of Faith

14 When they reached the crowd, a man ran up to Him

and fell on his knees before Him. [15]He said, "Lord, take pity on my son, for he is a lunatic and suffers terribly! Sometimes he falls into the fire, and more often into the water. [16]I brought him to your disciples but they could not heal him."

17 "O you unbelieving and misguided folk!" said Jesus. "How long shall I be with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him here to Me!" [18]And Jesus rebuked the demon, and he came out of him, and from that moment the boy was healed.

19 Afterward, when they were alone, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Why could we not drive him out?" [20]Jesus answered, "Because you lacked faith. I tell you truly, if you have faith — even though it be as small as a tiny mustard seed — you could say to this mountain, 'Move over from here to there! and it would move over. No, nothing will be impossible for you. [21]This kind, however, is cast out only by the help of prayer and fasting."

Jesus' Second Prediction of His Death

22 While they were still going about in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men, [23]And they will kill Him, but on the third day He shall rise again." And they were much distressed.

The Miracle of the Tax Payment

24 When they came to Capernaum, those who collected the temple tax came to Peter and asked, "Doesn't your Master pay taxes?" [25]He replied, "Yes." When Peter came into the house, Jesus spoke up first, saying, "Simon, what do you think? From whom do the kings of the world collect duties or taxes — from their sons or from others?" [26]Peter answered, "From others." Jesus then said, "Then the sons are exempt, aren't they? [27]But, so as not to offend them, go down to the sea, throw in a hook and take the first fish you catch, open its mouth and you will find a silver coin there. Take it and go pay the tax for Me and yourself."

CHAPTER 18

The Sermon on the Child

JUST then, the disciples came over and asked Jesus, "Who is really the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" [2]Jesus then called a little child and, placing the child in the center of the group, [3]He replied, "I tell you truly that if you do not have a change of heart and become like a child, you will not get into the kingdom of heaven at all. [4]The greatest in the kingdom of heaven must make himself as humble as a child. [5]Anyone who receives a little child in My name, receives Me. [6]But whoever leads astray one of these little ones who believe in Me might better have a millstone hung around his neck and be sunk in the depths of the sea.

7 "Woe to the world because of temptations offered to stumble — they must come, it seems — but woe especially to the man who causes them! [8]Indeed, if your hand or your foot should cause you to sin, cut them off and throw them away, for it is better for you to go into life minus a hand or foot than to be cast into everlasting fire with both hands and feet. [9]Likewise, if your eye cause you to sin, pluck it out and throw it away, for it is better for you to go into life with only one eye than to be cast into hell fire with both eyes.

10 "Be careful; do not despise the little children! For I tell you that in heaven their angels look to the face of My heavenly Father continually.

The Lost Sheep

11 "For the Son of Man has come to save what was lost. [12]"What do you think? Suppose a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them gets lost. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine up there in the mountains and go out in search of the one that was lost? [13]And if he finds it, don't you agree that he will have more joy over that one than over the ninety-nine

that did not go astray? I truly think so. [14]Even so, it is not the will of your heavenly Father that one of these little children should perish.

The Sinning Brother

15 "If your brother should do you a wrong, you should take the matter up with him. Talk to him in private; if he will listen to you, you have won back your brother. [16]If he will not listen to you, take one or two other persons with you, so that every word spoken may be confirmed by the testimony of two or three witnesses. [17]And if he will not listen to them, bring the matter before the Church, and then if he will not listen to the Church, let him be treated as a heathen or a foreigner. [18]It is absolutely true that what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and what you forgive on earth will be forgiven in heaven. [19]One thing more — if two of you agree on any request here on earth, My heavenly Father will answer your prayer. [20]For where two or three come together in My name, there I am in their midst."

Christian Forgiveness

21 Peter then came to Him and said, "How often must I forgive my brother if he sins against me? As many as seven times?" [22]"I tell you," said Jesus, "not up to seven times but to seventy times seven.

23 "The kingdom of heaven, therefore, is like a certain king who decided to go over his accounts with his servants. [24]He had hardly begun when there came in one of his subjects who owed him a million dollars. [25]But, as he had nothing to pay with, the king gave orders that he be sold, with his wife and children and everything that he had, in payment of the debt. [26]At this, the debtor fell prostrate before him, pleading, "Lord, be patient with me and I will pay you every cent." [27]The king took pity on his subject and set him free. In fact, he canceled the whole debt.

28 "And then that same man went out and found a fellow

subject who owed him about twenty dollars. He seized him by the throat and started to choke him, saying, 'Pay me what you owe me!' [29]The man fell at his feet and cried out, pleadingly, 'Give me time and I will pay for everything.' [30]But he refused. Rather, he had him thrown into jail to stay until he had paid the debt.

31 "Now, when others saw what had happened, they were angry, and they went to their master, the king, and reported what had taken place. [32]The king then sent for him. 'You wicked servant!' he said, 'I forgave your whole debt because you begged me. [33]Was it not proper that you, too, should have taken pity on your fellow servant, even as I took pity on you?' [34]Then the king, in wrath, turned him over to be tortured until he should pay all that he owed. [35]Just so will my heavenly Father do to you if you do not, every one of you, forgive his brother."

CHAPTER 19

Jesus' Teaching on Divorce

WHEN Jesus had finished His talk, He left Galilee and came to that part of Judea beyond the Jordan. [2]Many people followed after Him, and He healed them there.

3 Some Pharisees came to Him to test Him, and asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" [4]In answering them, He asked, "Have you never read that He who created them in the beginning created them male and female? [5]And also that He said, 'On that account shall a man leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two shall be as one flesh?' [6]They are, therefore, no longer two, but one flesh. What God has joined together, then, let no man separate. [7]Then they asked Him, "But why did the law of Moses permit a man to get a divorce certificate and put his wife away?" [8]"Moses," He said, "has allowed you to put away your wives because of the wickedness of

your hearts. But it was not intended that way at the beginning. [9]And I say to you that if you put away your wife for any reason except adultery, and marry another woman, you then commit adultery, and anyone who marries the divorced wife commits adultery."

10 His disciples then remarked, "If this is the rule as to man and wife, it seems best not to get married." [11]He answered, "Not all can accept such counsel, but only those who are so endowed. [12]Some men have always been unsuited for marriage, having been born that way. Some men have been made eunuchs by act of man, and some have chosen not to marry for the love of the kingdom of heaven. Let him who can, accept this call."

Jesus Blesses the Children

13 Then they brought little children to Him, that He might lay His hands upon them and offer prayer, but the disciples spoke sharply to them. [14]Then Jesus spoke up, "Let the children alone. Don't forbid them to come to me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." [15]Then He laid His hands on them, and went on.

The Rich Young Ruler

16 A man now came to Him and asked, "Good Teacher, what good thing must I do to win everlasting life?" [17]"You call me good?" said He. "There is no one good except one — God. And, as to winning everlasting life — if that is your desire — you must keep the commandments."

18 He said, "Which commandments?" "These," said Jesus — "you shall not murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness. [19]Honor your father and mother; and you shall love your neighbor as yourself."

20 The man — he was still young — said to Him, "Why, all these commandments I have kept from my youth. Just what do I still lack?" [21]Jesus answered him, "If you want

to be perfect, go, sell your property and give the money t the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. This done come and follow Me." 22When the young man heard thes words, he went away sorrowing, for he had many pos sessions.

23 At this, Jesus said to His disciples, "Yes, I tell yo it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven 24I say it again, it is easier for a camel to go through needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom o heaven. 25His disciples, in great astonishment, said, "Who then, can be saved? 26Looking at them, Jesus answered "With men it is impossible, but not with God. All things ar possible for Him."

The Apostles' Future Reward

27 Then Peter, answering Him, asked, "See! We hav left everything and followed You. What will there be fo us?" 28Jesus answered, "This I promise you — you who hav followed Me — that in the new world, when the Son of Mar will sit on the throne of His glory, then you, too, will si there on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel 29Indeed, everyone who has forsaken his home, or brother or sisters, or father or mother, or wife or children, or land — for My sake — will be rewarded a hundred times and wil obtain everlasting life. 30But many who now are first wil then be last; and many who now are last will then be first."

CHAPTER 20

The Parable of the Workmen

"FOR the kingdom of heaven in like a farmer who went out one morning to hire men to work in his vineyard. 2First, he made a contract with the workmen as to the pay — twenty cents for the day — and then he sent

them into the vineyard to work. 3He went out again about nine o'clock in the morning and saw some men in the town square, loafing, with nothing to do. 4So he spoke to them; 'If you will go and work in my vineyard, I shall pay you whatever is right.' 5And they went. Then, about noon, he went out again, and also about three o'clock he did the same. 6Once more he went out — about five o'clock — and again he found some hanging around doing nothing. He asked them, 'Why do you stand here all day idle?' 7They answered him, 'Because no one has given us work.' And he said to them, 'You, too, go into the vineyard and I shall pay you whatever is right.'

8 "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his overseer, 'Call in the workmen, starting with the last one hired, and on to the first.' 9When those came up who had been hired around five o'clock, each one received twenty cents. 10And, finally, when those who had been hired earliest came, they thought they would get more, but each one got twenty cents, but no more. 11But, on receiving it, they grumbled against their employer. 12'The late-comers,' they complained, 'worked only one hour, yet you have made them equal to us who have borne the burdens and the heat of the day.' 13He spoke to one of them, 'My friend, I have not wronged you. Didn't you agree with me on twenty cents? 14Take your pay and go. I want to give the late-comer the same as you got. 15Isn't it lawful for me to do with my money as I wish? Are you envious because I want to be generous?' 16So, the last shall be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few are chosen."

Jesus' Third Prediction of His Death

17 When Jesus set out for Jerusalem again, He took His disciples aside on the way and had a talk with them. 18"See here," said He, "when we go up to Jerusalem this time, the Son of Man will be given into the hands of the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death. 19And

to be perfect, go, sell your property and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. This done, come and follow Me." [22]When the young man heard these words, he went away sorrowing, for he had many possessions.

23 At this, Jesus said to His disciples, "Yes, I tell you it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. [24]I say it again, it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. [25]His disciples, in great astonishment, said, "Who, then, can be saved? [26]Looking at them, Jesus answered, "With men it is impossible, but not with God. All things are possible for Him."

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they, in turn, will deliver Him to the heathen to be mocked and scourged and crucified. But on the third day, He will rise again."

The Ambitious Mother

20 The mother of the sons of Zebedee now came to Him with her sons. She knelt before Him, and wanted to beg some favor of Him." [21]"What is it you want?" He asked her. She answered, "Promise me this, that in Your kingdom one of my sons may sit at Your right hand and the other at Your left." [22]But Jesus said, in reply, "No, you do not understand what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They answered Him, "Yes, we are." [23]He said, "Well, then you shall drink my cup. But to be seated at My right hand and at My left hand is not for Me to give. Those seats will be given to those for whom they have been prepared by My Father."

24 When the other ten disciples heard this, they were angry at the two brothers. [25]So Jesus called the disciples to Him and said, "You know how the heathen rulers are high-handed with their people, and how their chiefs likewise rule as dictators. [26]But it must not be that way among you. Rather, if one of you desires to be great, let him be your servant. [27]And if he aspires to be greatest among you, let him be your slave. [28]With you it should be like the Son of Man — He came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom to set many free."

The Healing of the Blind Men

29 A great crowd followed after Him as He left Jericho. [30]Now, there were two blind men sitting by the roadside. When they learned that Jesus was passing by, they cried out, "Lord, Son of David, take pity on us!" [31]The crowd rebuked them and told them to keep quiet. But they cried out still louder, "Have pity on us, Lord, Son of David!" [32]Jesus stopped and spoke to them. "What do you want Me to do

for you?" He asked. 33They answered, "Lord, oh, if You would only open our eyes!" 34Then Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes. And they at once could see, and they followed Him.

CHAPTER 21

The Borrowed Donkey and Colt

WHEN they were nearing Jerusalem, and had reached Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples ahead, giving them orders. 2"Go into the village that faces you," He said, "and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt at her side. Untie them and bring them to me. 3Should anyone say anything to you, then reply, 'The Lord needs them.' He will then send them at once."

4 All this took place in fulfillment of what the prophet had said, 5"Say to the Daughter of Zion, 'Look! Your King is coming to you, meek, mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden' " (*Zech.* 9:9).

Jesus Enters Jerusalem

6 The disciples then left and did as Jesus directed them. 7They fetched the donkey and her colt and placed their coats upon them, and Jesus sat thereon. 8Many of the crowd strewed the road with their clothing, while others cut off branches from the trees and scattered them on the way 9And the people who went ahead of Him — and also those following — shouted, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!"

10 As He entered Jerusalem, it was all astir. The whole city was asking, "And who is this?" 11and the crowd kept answering, "This is Jesus, the Prophet from Nazareth in Galilee."

The Cleansing of the Temple

12 Jesus then went into God's temple, and He drove out
all the buyers and sellers there. He tipped over the tables
of the cashiers and the chairs of those selling doves. 13And
He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called
a house of prayer,' but you have made it a den of thieves."
14 He healed the blind and crippled who came to Him
there. 15But the chief priests and scribes became furious
when they saw the miracles He did and when they heard the
children in the temple chanting, "Hosanna to the Son of
David!" 16They said to Him, "Do you hear what they are
saying?" "Surely," said Jesus in reply, "and have you never
read the saying, 'You have brought forth perfect praise from
the mouths of babes and sucklings'?" 17Then He left them
and went out of the city to Bethany, and stayed overnight
there.

The Barren Fig Tree Cursed

18 Early the next morning He went back to the city; He
was hungry. 19There was a fig tree by the wayside. On seeing
this He went up to it, but found nothing on it but leaves.
He then said to the tree, "Let no fruit ever grow on you
hereafter!" The fig tree thereupon immediately withered.
20The disciples, seeing this, were amazed, and remarked,
"How suddenly the fig tree withered away!" 21Then Jesus
said to them, "Yes, if you have faith — if you do not doubt
— you may do not only the miracle of the fig tree, but you
may even say to this mountain, 'Move aside! Throw your-
self into the sea!' and it will be done. 22Listen! If you will
only believe, you will get everything you ask for in prayer."

Jesus' Authority Questioned

23 He came into the temple again, and as He was busy
teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people ap-
proached Him and demanded, "By what authority are you

doing these things? Who gave you this authority?" [24]Jesus answered, "Just let Me ask you one question, too, and if you will answer it, then I also shall tell you by what authority I am doing My work. [25]My question is, how about the baptism of John? Was it from heaven or from men?" They argued the question among themselves like this: "If we say it was from heaven, then He will say, 'Then why didn't you believe him?' [26]But if we say it was from men, then we have the people to fear, for they all believe that John was a prophet." [27]So they answered Jesus this way, "We do not know." "All right," said He, "then I shall not tell you by what authority I do what I do."

The Parable of the Two Sons

28 "Now what do you think of this? Once there was a man who had two sons. One day he went to the first-born and said to him, 'My boy, will you go and work today in my vineyard?' [29]But he answered, 'No, I shall not.' Afterward, he felt sorry, and went to work. [30]In the meantime, the man had gone to his second son and put the same question to him. He had answered, 'Yes, sir. I shall go.' But he did not go to work. [31]Now, which of the two sons did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus then said to them, "Yes, and tax collectors and harlots will go into the kingdom of God before you. [32]For John came to you preaching righteousness, but you would not believe him. The tax-collectors and harlots believed him, while you, seeing this, did not afterward repent and believe him.

The Parable of the Vine-dressers

33 "Now listen to another parable. Once there was a farmer who planted a vineyard and fenced it in. Next, he dug a wine-press and built a watchtower. Then he leased it to tenants and went away. [34]When the fruit season drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants to get his share. [35]But the tenants took hold of his servants, one of whom they beat up,

another they killed outright, and still another they stoned. [36]Once more he sent out other servants — and more of them than the first time — but the tenants treated them in the same manner. [37]Finally, he sent his own son to them, thinking, 'They will surely have respect for my son.' [38]But it was not so, for when the tenants saw the son, they said to one another. 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and get possession of his estate.' [39]So they laid hands on him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him, too. [40]When the owner of the vineyard returns, what will he do to these tenants?"

41 They said, "Those wicked men he will surely bring to a wretched end and he will lease the vineyard to other tenants, who will pay him his share of the fruits in their seasons."

The Rejected Stone

42 Jesus asked them, "Have you never read the Scripture passage, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone; The Lord has done it, and it is wonderful in our eyes'? [43]Because of this, I tell you that the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a people who will yield proper fruit. [44]As for the Stone, he will break to pieces him who falls on it, and he who falls under it will be ground to powder." (*Ps.* 118:22,23; *Isa.* 8:14,15).

45 As the chief priests and the Pharisees were listening to His parables, they understood that it was about them that He was speaking. [46]They were anxious to have Him arrested, but they were afraid of the people, who regarded Him as a prophet.

CHAPTER 22

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

ONCE more Jesus spoke to them in parables. He said, [2]"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a certain king who made a wedding feast for his son. [3]He sent his servants to notify those who had been invited

to the banquet, but they would not come.

4 "A second time he sent other messengers, saying to them, 'Tell those who have been invited, "See! My dinner is prepared; my oxen and fatlings have been killed, and everything is ready. So, come to the wedding feast!" ' [5]But they still disregarded the summons, and went about their work, one to his own farm, another to his place of business. [6]And the rest laid hold of his servants, insulted them and killed them.

7 "When the king heard of what had happened, he went into a rage, and, having sent his troops, he destroyed those murderers and burned their city. [8]This done, he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast has, indeed, been ready, but the invited guests were unworthy. [9]You must now go out upon the highways, and invite to the feast everyone whom you find there.' [10]The servants accordingly went out upon the highways and brought together all they met, both good and bad, so the banquet hall was full of guests.

11 "Then the king came in to take a look at the guests. He saw a man there who was not dressed up for a wedding. [12]'My friend,' he said to him, 'how is it that you came in here without a wedding suit?' But the man was speechless. [13]Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind his hands and feet, take him out, throw him into the darkness outside where he may weep and gnash his teeth.' [14]For many are called, but few are chosen."

The Herodians Inquire About Tribute

15 The Pharisees then went and held a meeting, plotting on how to ensnare Him in His speech. [16]They sent to Him some of their disciples, together with some of Herod's men, asking, "Teacher, we know that you are sincere, and that you teach the way of God truthfully, also that you do not fear anyone, for you are not a respecter of persons. [17]Tell us, therefore, what you think. Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" [18]Jesus saw through their wicked scheme

and answered, "Why are you tempting Me, you hypocrites? 19Show me the coin used for taxes." So they handed Him a silver twenty-cent piece (*denarius*). 20He then said to them, "This image on the coin — whose is it? And the inscription?" 21"Caesar's," they told Him. Then He said to them, "Give to Caesar, then, what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God." 22They got up and left Him, amazed at what they had heard.

The Sadducees Inquire About the Resurrection

23 On that same day, the Sadducees, too, came to Him. Since they did not believe in the resurrection, they set forth this question, 24"Teacher, Moses has said, 'If a man should die childless, then his brother must marry his wife and raise up children in his dead brother's name.' 25Now here is an actual case of seven brothers. The oldest married, but died before he had any children. The second brother then married the widow. 26Also, the second brother died, and in like manner, the third, and so on until the seventh. They all died. 27And last of all, the woman died. 28In the life to come, then, whose wife will she be, since they all had her as wife?"

29 "You are greatly mistaken," said Jesus, in answer, "for you do not know the Scriptures, or the power of God. 30For after the resurrection neither do they marry nor are they given in marriage, but they are like God's angels in heaven. 31And as to the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what God once said — also to you — in these words, 32'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?' That means God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." 33This the people heard, and they were dumbfounded at His teaching.

34 The Pharisees held another meeting when they got news that He had put the Sadducees to silence. 35Then one of them, a law teacher, in order to test Him, asked, 36"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" 37Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord, your God,

with your whole heart, with your whole soul and with your whole mind. [38]This is the first and great commandment. [39]And the second is like it in importance. It reads, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' [40]On these two commandments, all the Law and the Prophets are based."

Jesus Questions the Pharisees

41 Jesus now put a question to the Pharisees, for they were still gathered there. [42]He asked, "What is your opinion as to the Christ? Whose Son is He?" "David's," they answered. [43]"How is it, then," He continued, "that David, by the help of the Spirit, called Him Lord when he said, [44]'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand while I make your enemies a footstool under your feet?" ' (Psalm 110:1). [45]If David calls Him Lord, how can He also be David's Son?" [46]No one could answer Him a word. Nor, from that day on, did anyone dare to try to trap Him with further questions.

CHAPTER 23

Jesus Exposes the Pharisees

AFTER this, Jesus addressed the crowds and His disciples. [2]"The scribes and the Pharisees," He said, "now take the place of Moses. [3]Therefore, do what they tell you to do, and continue to do it. But don't do as they do, for they preach but do not practice. [4]They make up unbearably heavy burdens and place them on men's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to help them. [5]They do all their deeds to be seen of men. They wear big Scripture texts on their coats, and make large tassels for their garments. [6]And how they like to have the first places at their banquets, and the chief seats at the synagogues! [7]They like the greetings in the market-places, and especially to have men call them Rabbi (Doctor, Teacher).

8 "You must not seek to be called by titles, such as
Teacher, for there is but one Teacher, and you are all
brothers alike. 9And do not call any man here on earth
Father, for there is but one Father, and He is in heaven.
10Nor must you be called Leaders, for you have but one
Leader, namely, the Christ. 11Let the greatest among you be
the one who serves most. 12He who exalts himself will be
humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted.

The Seven Woes Upon the Pharisees

13 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites!
For you lock up the kingdom of heaven against men. You
do not dare go in yourselves, and you do not let those go
in who are trying to do so. 14Woe to you, scribes and Phari-
sees — you hypocrites! For you eat up the houses of widows,
while making a show of holiness by long prayers. And for
this you will get a heavier sentence.

15 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites!
For you scour land and sea to make one convert, and when
he is won, you make him twice as fit for hell as you, your-
selves, are!

16 "Woe to you, blind guides! You say, 'If one swears by
the temple it means nothing, but if he swears by the gold in
the temple, then his oath stands.' 17You blind fools! Which
is the greater, the gold, or the temple that makes the gold
sacred? 18And you say, 'If one swears by the altar it means
nothing, but if he swears by the gift laid on the altar, then
he must pay his vows. 19You blind fools! Which is the
greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? 20So,
whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and everything on
it. 21And whoever swears by the temple swears by it and by
Him who dwells in it. 22And whoever swears by heaven,
swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

23 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites!
For you pay tithes of mint and dill and spices, but the more
important things of the Law — justice, mercy, faith — these

you leave undone. [24]You blind guides! You strain out a gnat, but you swallow a camel!

25 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites! For you scour the outside of the cup and the plate, but you leave the inside full of plunder and intemperance. [26]You blind Pharisee! Scour the inside of the cup and plate first, and let the outside become equally clean!

27 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs. Outside they look beautiful, but inside they are full of the bones of the dead, and everything that is unclean. [28]So you, too, seem outwardly to be upright, yet inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

29 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees — you hypocrites! For you build tombs for the prophets and you decorate the graves of the righteous. [30]And you say, 'Oh, if we only had lived in the days of our forefathers! We surely would not have joined them in murdering the prophets.' [31]So, you do admit that you are the sons of those who slaughtered the prophets? [32]Yes, indeed, you may as well match the measure of their guilt! [33]Serpents that you are, offspring of vipers, how can you escape being sentenced to hell?

A Guilty Generation

34 "For this reason, I am going to keep on sending you prophets and wise men and scholars, some of whom you will kill — even crucify — and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city. [35]In this way you will heap upon your own heads the righteous blood shed on this earth, from the blood of the righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, Berachiah's son, whom you put to death between the temple and the altar. [36]I solemnly say to you, all these things will happen to this generation.

Jesus' Lament over Jerusalem

37 "Jerusalem, O Jerusalem! who still kills the prophets

and stones those sent to her. How often would I have gathered your children around Me, even as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but you would not! [38]Now, see! I am leaving you to yourselves, your house empty. [39]Indeed, you will never see Me again until you will say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

CHAPTER 24

Jesus Predicts Destruction of the Temple

JESUS left the temple and was on His way when His disciples came to Him, calling to His attention the temple buildings. [2]"Do you see all this?" He said. "I tell you the truth; all this shall be torn down. Not one stone will be left here upon another."

General Signs of the Lord's Return

3 Then, as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came up to Him by themselves and said, "Tell us, when will all this take place? And what sign will there be of Your coming, and of the end of the world?" [4]Jesus answered, "Be careful that someone does not mislead you in this. [5]For many will come using My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and many will be misled by them. [6]You will hear a lot about wars and rumors of wars, but don't be alarmed; these things must take place, although the end will not come yet. [7]Nations will rise against nations, kingdoms against kingdoms, and there will be famines and pestilences and earthquakes in various places. [8]But all this is only the beginning of the sufferings.

9 "Then they will turn you over to be tortured; yes, they will put you to death. Every people will hate you because you bear My name. [10]Alas! Many will fall away, will betray and hate one another. [11]And many false prophets will arise,

and many people will be misled by them. [12]Lawlessness will be on the increase everywhere, hence love in most people's hearts will grow cold. [13]Nevertheless, he who holds out to the end shall be saved. [14]This good news about the kingdom must be preached throughout the world as a witness to all the nations. Then, this done, the end will come.

The Great Tribulation

15 "So, when you shall see the 'abomination of desolation,' as the prophet Daniel calls it, set up in the holy place (may the one who reads this understand clearly!), [16]then let those in Judea take refuge in the mountains. [17]If someone is on the housetop, he must not come down to get any belongings out of the house. [18]One who is working in the field must not come back to get his coat. [19]Alas for expectant mothers in those days, and also for those who have nursing babies! [20]Pray that your flight be not in winter or on the sabbath. [21]For at that time there will be great distress, greater than has ever been before since the beginning of the world, or ever will be again. [22]And, if the number of those days be not reduced, no living thing can be saved. But on account of the elect, the time will be cut short.

23 "If anyone should then say to you, 'See! Here is the Christ!' or 'There!' do not believe him. [24]False Christs will arise, and false prophets. They will work great signs and wonders, aiming to deceive, if possible, even the elect. [25]I have warned you about this in time. [26]So, if they tell you, 'See! He is in the wilderness!' do not go there to see, or if they say, 'He is in some room,' do not believe it. [27]For when the Son of Man comes, it will be suddenly, like the lightning that starts in the East and flashes across to the West. [28]And wherever a corpse lies, there the vultures will flock.

Jesus' Return in Glory

29 "Immediately after the distress of those days, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not shed its light; the

stars will fall from the sky, and the forces in the heavens will be shaken. [30]Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the peoples of the earth will mourn as they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds above, with great power and majesty. [31]He will send out His angels with loud-sounding trumpets, and they will gather His elect from the four winds — from one end of the sky to the other.

32 "From the story of the fig tree, learn this: when its branches have become tender and have put forth leaves, you know that summer is near at hand. [33]Likewise, when you behold all these signs, you will know that the time is near; He is at the door. [34]Truly I speak, this age shall not come to an end before all these things shall have taken place.

The Date of His Return Is Unknown

35 "Sky and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away. [36]But as for the day and the hour of the end, no one knows that, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but My Father only.

37 "When the Son of Man comes, things will be as in the days of Noah. [38]In those days, before the flood, people ate and drank, married and were given away in marriage right up to the day when Noah went into the ark. [39]They did not know the time, and they were taken by surprise when the flood came and swept them all away. It shall be like that at the coming of the Son of Man. [40]Two men will then be working in the field; one will be taken, the other left. [41]Two women will be at the grist-mill; one will be taken, the other left.

42 "Watch, then, for you do not know in what hour your Lord will come. [43]One thing is certain, that if the master of a house knew before as to the time when a thief was coming, he would be on the watch and would not let him break into his house. [44]You, too, must stand ready, for the Son of Man will come at some unexpected moment.

Faithful and Unfaithful Servants

45 "Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant — one whom
a master can set over his household, to prepare food at the
proper time? 46Blessed is such a servant who is doing his
work when his master drops in on him. 47I tell you that he
may put him over all he has.

48 "But suppose that the servant is wicked and thinks like
this, 'I guess the master will not come so soon.' 49Suppose,
too, that he begins to beat the other servants, and to eat and
drink with the drunkards? 50Then the master of the servant
will come some day, at some moment when he is not ex-
pected. 51And he will punish him severely and give him a
place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and
gnashing of teeth.

CHAPTER 25

The Parable of the Ten Maidens

"THEN the kingdom of heaven will be like ten
maidens who took their lamps and went out to meet the
bridegroom. 2Of these, five were foolish and five were wise.
3The foolish ones took their lamps along but forgot to take
oil with them. 4But the wise ones brought not only their
lamps but also extra oil in their containers. 5While the bride-
groom delayed in coming they all grew drowsy and fell
asleep.

6 "At midnight there was a shout, 'Wake up! The bride-
groom is on his way! Go out to meet him!' 7Then all those
maidens got up and trimmed their lamps. 8'Give us some of
your oil,' said the foolish ones to the wise ones, 'for our
lamps are going out.' 9The wise answered, 'No; there may
not be enough for us and you, too. Rather, why don't you
go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves?' 10But while
they were gone to buy oil, the bridegroom came, and those
who stood ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and

the door was shut. [11]After a while, the other maidens cam
begging, 'Sir, please open! Let us in!' [12]But the answer wa
'Truly, I don't know you.' [13]Watch, therefore, because yo
do not know the day or the hour when the Son of Man wi
come.

The Parable of the Talents

14. "For it is like a man who was leaving his homelan
He called in his servants and entrusted his property to then
[15]He gave to one of them five thousand dollars, to anoth
two thousand, and to a third, one thousand — to each or
according to his ability. This done, he left the countr
[16]When he had gone, the man who had received five thou
sand dollars used them in business and made a profit of fiv
thousand more. [17]In like manner, the man who had receive
two thousand dollars made an extra two thousand. [18]But th
one who had received only one thousand went and dug a ho
in the ground, where he hid his master's money.

19 "After a long stay, the master of these servants can
back and had a settlement with them. [20]The one who ha
gotten five thousand dollars came up, bringing with him a
additional five thousand. He said, 'Sir, you let me have fiv
thousand dollars. Look! Here are five thousand extra th
I have made as profit.' [21]His master said to him, 'Fine! Yo
are a good and faithful servant. You have been faithful ov
a few things. I shall entrust many things to your care. Yo
may have a share in my joy.'

22 "The man who had gotten two thousand dollars als
came before him and reported, 'Sir, you let me have tw
thousand dollars, but see! with them I have made two thou
sand dollars more.' [23]Said his master to him, 'Wonderfu
You, too, are a good and faithful servant. You have bee
faithful over a few things, and I shall set you over man
things. I want you to have a share in my joy.'

24 "Also the man who had gotten only one thousand do
lars came to him and gave an accounting. He said, 'I kne

that you are a tight-fisted man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not planted. [25]So, I was afraid, and I went and buried your money in the ground, and here it is.' [26]His master said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you say you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered. [27]Therefore, you should have deposited my money with the bankers, so that when I returned I could get my money back with interest. [28]So, take away from him the thousand dollars, and give it to him who now has ten thousand.' [29]For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have plenty, but from him who has virtually nothing, even what little he has will be taken from him. [30]'And now, put the useless servant into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Judgment of the Nations

31 "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit down on His throne of glory. [32]And all the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. [33]He will put the sheep at his right hand, the goats at His left.

34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you folk who received a blessing from My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. [35]For I was hungry and you fed Me; I was thirsty and you gave Me a drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in. [36]Yes, I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you cared for Me; I was in prison and you came to see Me.'

37 "Then the good people will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we ever see You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and gave You drink? [38]When did we see You a stranger and take You in? Or naked, and clothe You? [39]And when did we see You sick or in prison, and come to You? [40]And the King will say in reply, 'Believe Me when I say that whatever good

deed you have done to the least of My brothers, you have done it to Me.'

41 "To those at His left He will then say, 'Begone, you accursed folk, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels! 42For I was hungry, but you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, but you gave Me nothing to drink. 43I was a stranger, but you did not take Me in; I was naked, but you did not clothe Me; I was sick, and in prison, but you did not visit Me.'

44 "Then also these will answer, asking, 'When did we ever see You hungry or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to you?' 45In answer, He will say, 'Truly, I say to you, that since you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46And they will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life."

CHAPTER 26

Jesus' Fourth Prediction of His Death

WHEN Jesus finished these talks, He turned to His disciples, saying, 2"You know that in two days comes the Passover, and the Son of Man will be given up to be crucified."

The Plot to Murder Jesus

3 The chief priests and the elders of the people then met at the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. 4They plotted together as to how they could, by some trick, get Jesus arrested and killed. 5They said, however, "It must not take place during the festival, lest a riot break out among the people."

Jesus Anointed by Mary

6 Jesus was at Bethany, in the home of Simon, the leper.

7While He was at the table there, a woman came up to Him with a bottle of very costly perfume, and poured it on His head. 8When the disciples saw it, they were angry, and said, "Why such waste? 9This ointment could have been sold at a good price and given to the poor."

10 Jesus knew what they were saying, and said to them, "Don't find fault with the woman. She has done Me a kind act. 11The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have Me. 12When she poured this ointment on My body, she was really preparing Me for My burial. 13And I tell you that wherever the Gospel will be preached in the whole world, what this woman has now done will be told in her memory."

Judas' Treacherous Bargain

14 Then one of the Twelve, Judas Iscariot by name, went to the chief priests. 15He asked, "What will you pay me if I hand Him over to you?" They agreed on thirty pieces of silver, and paid him. 16So, from then on, Judas was looking for a good chance to let them take Him.

The Preparation for the Passover

17 On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus to ask, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover meal?" 18He answered, "Go into the city to a certain man and tell him that the Teacher says, 'My time is near. I shall keep the Passover, together with My disciples, at your place.' " 19The disciples then did as Jesus had told them, and they prepared the Passover.

Jesus Identifies the Betrayer

20 When evening came, He took His place at the table with the Twelve. 21Then, while they were eating, He said, "I have this to tell you, that one of you will betray Me." 22They became very sad, and one by one they asked Him,

"Is it I, Lord?" [23]He answered, "The one who will betray Me is the one who has just dipped his hand with mine in the dish. [24]The Son of Man is going just as it has been written concerning Him, but woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man! It were better for that man if he had never been born." [25]Judas, the one who was betraying Him, also asked, "Teacher, I am not the one, am I?" He answered him, "Yes, you are the man."

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

26 Then, while they were seated, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it and gave to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat; this is My body. [27]Then, having taken a cup, He offered thanks and gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, each of you, [28]For this is My blood of the New Covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. [29]I tell you that I shall not drink of the fruit of the vine again till the day when I shall drink the new wine with you in My Father's kingdom." [30]Then, after they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

31 "Tonight," said Jesus to them, "you will all take offense and desert me, for Scripture says, 'I will kill the Shepherd; then the sheep of His flock will be scattered to the winds' (Zech. 13:7). [32]But I shall be raised again from the dead, after which I shall go on before you into Galilee."

33 Peter then said to Him, "Even if all the others should desert You, I will never desert You." [34]Jesus said to Him, "Listen! This very night, before the rooster crows, you are going to disown me three times." [35]Peter answered Him, "I will never, never disown You, not if I have to die for You!" All the other disciples said the same.

In Gethsemane

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Geth-

semane. He said to them, "You sit down here while I go over yonder to pray." [37]He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, but became sad and deeply depressed. [38]He said to them, "My soul is ready to die of sorrow. You stay here and watch with Me."

39 He went on a little farther, then fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass Me by. Yet, not My will but Yours be done."

40 Then He went back to His disciples and found them asleep. To Peter He said, "Could you not watch with Me for even an hour? [41]Watch and pray that you may not have to be tempted. Man's spirit is willing, but his flesh is weak."

42 Again, a second time, He went over by Himself and prayed. "My Father, "He said," if this cup can not pass Me by without My drinking it, then Your will be done!" [43]He came back again and found them sleeping, for their eyelids were heavy. [44]He left them sleeping and went again to pray a third time, asking the same thing. [45]This done, He went back to His disciples, saying to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Wake up! The time is at hand when the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners. [46]Rise up! Let us go! See there, my betrayer is close at hand!"

The Betrayal of Jesus

47 Suddenly, even while He was speaking, there came Judas, one of the Twelve, followed by a great rabble armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent by the chief priests and elders of the people. [48]The betrayer had given them a signal beforehand. He had said, "The Man whom I greet with a kiss — it is He. Seize Him!" [49]He went right up to Jesus and said, "Hail, Master!" and kissed Him. [50]But Jesus said to him, "Friend, what do you come for?" Then they came up to Jesus, laid their hands on Him and arrested him.

51 At this, one of the men with Jesus drew his sword and gave a servant of the high priest a blow, cutting off an ear.

52"Return your sword to its place," said Jesus to him, "for all who take up the sword will die by the sword. 53Don't you believe that if I ask My Father, even now, He will send more than a hundred thousand angels? 54And how else could the Scriptures be fulfilled which say that it has to be this way?"

55 At the same time, Jesus spoke to the rabble, "Why have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as though I were a robber? I have been with you daily, teaching in the temple, but you never laid hands on Me before. 56But this has all taken place so that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled."

The disciples then all deserted Him. They fled.

Jesus Examined by Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin

57 Jesus was led to Caiaphas, the high priest, by those who had arrested Him. The scribes and the elders were gathered together there. 58Peter followed Him at some distance, right up to the high priest's courtroom. And he went in and took a seat among the attendants, to see the outcome. 59The chief priests and the whole Council were looking for false testimony against Jesus, by which they might put Him to death. 60But they could find none, even though many came forward and lied about Him. 61At last, two false accusers came up, saying, "This Man said, 'I can destroy God's temple and rebuild it again in three days.' "

62 Then the high priest, standing up, asked Him, "Have You no answer to make? What do You say to these accusations brought against You?" 63Jesus kept silent. The high priest then said to Him, "I put you on oath, by the living God, to tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." 64Jesus now answered him, "Yes, it is true, as you say. And I tell you that from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

65 At this, the high priest ripped his clothes and cried,

out. "He has blasphemed! What more need do we have of witnesses? Yes, indeed, you, yourselves, have all heard Him blaspheme. 66What do you say?"

They answered, "He deserves death!" 67Then they spat in His face and hit Him with their fists. Some slapped Him on the cheek with their open hands. 68They mockingly said, "Christ, You are a prophet. Tell us, then, who is that fellow who just now gave You a blow?"

Peter's Denial

69 Now Peter was outside, sitting in the courtyard, when a servant girl came to him and said, "Say, you were with Jesus, the Galilean!" 70But he made denial before them all, saying, "I don't know what you are talking about." 71Then he went out and stood near a gate, and was seen by another girl, who said to the bystanders, "This man was with Jesus, the Nazarene." 72He made denial once more, and with an oath. "I don't know the man," he said. 73After a little, some of the bystanders came up and said to Peter, "Surely you are one of them, for even your dialect makes that plain." 74Once more he began to curse and swear, saying, "I don't know the man!" And right then the rooster crowed.

75 Then Peter remembered what Jesus had told him — "Before the rooster crows you are going to disown me three times" — and he went out and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER 27

Jesus Taken to Pilate

AT daybreak, all the chief priests and elders of the people met and laid their plans against Jesus, how to have Him put to death. 2So they bound Him, then led Him away and turned Him over to Pontius Pilate, the governor.

The Remorse and Suicide of Judas

3 When Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He was

condemned, he was full of remorse. He went to the chief priests and elders and gave them back their pieces of silver. 4He said, "I have sinned in betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? It concerns you only." 5He then threw down the money there in the temple and went out. Then he went away and hanged himself.

6 The chief priests then took the money, but they said, "It is unlawful to put it into the treasury, since it is blood-money." 7After debating the question a while, they used it to buy a potter's field, as a burial ground for strangers. 8On that account, it has been called the Field of Blood to this day. 9In that way the word of the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled, when he said, "They took the thirty pieces of silver — the price of Him whose price was fixed, fixed by some of the sons of Israel — 10and bought the potter's field, as the Lord directed me" (*Zech.* 11:13).

Jesus Questioned by Pilate

11 Then Jesus stood before the governor, and the governor asked Him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" And Jesus answered him, "Yes, it is true, as you say." 12But when the chief priests and elders accused Him, He made no answer. 13Pilate then said to Him, "Don't You hear all the things they are saying against You?" 14But He did not answer His question by even one word, so that the governor was greatly astonished.

The Choice — Jesus or Barabbas

15 It was customary at the festival that the governor would set at liberty some prisoner, of the people's choice. 16They had at this time a notorious prisoner named Barabbas. 17So, when the people came together, Pilate asked them, "Whom do you want me to set free — Barabbas, or Jesus, who is called the Christ?" 18He knew well that it was through envy that they had brought Jesus to him.

19 Moreover, while he was sitting on the judge's seat, his

wife sent him a note, as follows: "Have nothing to do with this upright man. I had a dream about him today and suffered much on his account." [20]But the chief priests and elders persuaded the gathered crowd to ask that Barabbas be freed and that Jesus be executed. [21]The governor then asked, "Which one of the two do you want me to set free?" They answered, "Barabbas." [22]Then Pilate said to them, "But what shall I do, then, with Jesus, who is called the Christ?" They all shouted back, "Crucify Him!" [23]But the governor then asked, "But what wrong has He done?" The mob shouted the louder, saying, "Crucify Him!" [24]When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere, and that there was danger of a riot, he took water and washed his hands before the mob, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this righteous man; it is your responsibility." [25]And the mob answered, "His blood be on us and on our children." [26]Then Pilate set Barabbas free for them, but scourged Jesus, and then gave Him to be crucified.

The Crown of Thorns

27 Next, the governor's soldiers took Jesus into their armory and gathered their whole company about Him. [28]First, they stripped Him, then put on Him a scarlet robe. [29]After that, they put on His head a crown they had made from thorns, and placed a rod in His right hand, and knelt down before Him in mockery, saying, "Hail, O King of the Jews!" [30]And they spat upon Him, and took the rod and struck Him on the head with it. [31]Finally, when they were through with mocking Him, they took off His robe and put His own garments upon Him again. Then they led Him away to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

32 As they were on their way they came across a Cyrenian named Simon, whom they forced to carry the cross. [33]They came to a place called Golgotha, which means, Place of the Skull. [34]There they gave Him some wine mixed with a bitter drug, but when He tasted it He would not drink.

35 Then they crucified Him, and afterward divided His
garments among them by casting lots. 36They sat down there
and kept guard over Him. 37And they placed over His head
the charge against Him, in writing, "This is Jesus, the King
of the Jews."

The Two Thieves

38 There were crucified with Him also two robbers, one
at the right and one at the left. 39The passers-by shook their
heads and mocked Him. 40"You who could destroy the tem-
ple and then rebuild it in three days," they said, "come, save
yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the
cross!" 41Also the chief priests, together with the scribes
and elders, in like manner, jeered, saying, 42He saved others,
but himself He cannot save. He is the King of Israel! If so,
let him come down from the cross and we will believe on
him. 43He put his trust in God. If God cares for him, let him
rescue him now, for he said, 'I am the Son of God'." 44Also
the robbers who were crucified with Him reproached Him
with the same taunts.

The Death of Jesus

45At noon, darkness came upon the whole land, lasting
until three o'clock. 46Then, about three o'clock, Jesus cried
out with a loud voice, *"Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?"* That
means, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?"
47On hearing this, some of the bystanders said, "This man is
calling to Elijah." 48And immediately someone ran and took
a sponge, filled it with vinegar, put it on a stick and held it
up to Him for a drink. 49"Leave Him alone," said the others,
"but let us see if Elijah will come to save Him." 50Then Jesus
gave another loud outcry and gave up His spirit.

The Crucifixion Miracles

51 And, all at once, the curtain in the temple was torn
in two from top to bottom, the earth quaked and the rocks

split apart. 52Graves also opened, and many bodies of saints who had fallen asleep rose up. 53After His resurrection, these left their graves and went into the Holy City, showing themselves to many. 54But when the army captain and his men who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and what took place along with it, they were terribly frightened.

The Women at the Cross

55 Some women, who had followed Jesus from Galilee to wait on Him, were watching from a distance. 56Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

The Burial of Jesus

57 A rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, came that evening. He, too, was a follower of Jesus. 58He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate then gave orders to give it to him. 59Joseph accordingly took the body and wrapped it in a piece of clean linen cloth. 60He then placed it in his own new tomb that he had hewn out of the rock. Next, he rolled a huge stone in front of the door to the tomb, and departed. 61But Mary Magdalene and the other Mary stayed on, sitting opposite the tomb.

62 On the next day — the day after the Preparation — the chief priests and the Pharisees went in a body to Pilate. 63"Sir," they said, "we recall that this imposter, while alive, said, 'After three days, I shall rise again.' 64Give an order, therefore, to have the tomb made secure until the third day, lest His disciples should come by night and steal Him away and then tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' This last fraud would thus be even worse than the first." 65"You may have a guard of soldiers," said Pilate, "and, by all means, go and make it as secure as you know how." 66They then went and made the tomb safe. They sealed the stone, and set a guard to watch it.

CHAPTER 28

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

NOW, late on the sabbath, as dawn was appearing on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to look after the tomb. [2]And there was an earthquake just as an angel of the Lord came down from heaven. He rolled the stone back and sat down on it. [3]His face was as bright as lightning and his clothing as white as snow. [4]The guards trembled with fear and dropped down like dead men.

5 The angel then spoke to the women, "Don't be afraid. Of course, I know that you are here to look for Jesus, the Crucified One. [6]He is not here. He has risen, as He said He would. Come and see the place where He lay. [7]Now, hurry! Go tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead, and, behold! He will go on before you into Galilee. You will see Him there. See! Now I have told you."

8 They left the tomb in haste, both in fear and in great joy, and ran to tell the news to His disciples.

Jesus Meets the Women

9 Then, as they were on their way to His disciples, all at once Jesus met them and greeted them. They came near Him, clasping His feet as they worshiped Him. [10]"Don't be afraid," said Jesus to them. "Go and tell the disciples to go back to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

The Jewish Explanation of the Resurrection

11 When they were on their way, some of the soldiers of the guard went into the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. [12]Then these met together with the elders to take counsel, and they decided to give the soldiers a large bribe. [13]They said to them, "You must say that His disciples came and stole His body while you were

asleep. [14]And if the governor gets to hear of this, we shall make it right with him, so you need not be worried." [15]So the soldiers took the money and did as they were told. And this is the tale that has gone out among the Jews down to the present day.

The Great Commission

16 Then the eleven disciples went back to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. [17]They fell down to worship Him when they saw Him, but some were somewhat skeptical. [18]Then Jesus came near and spoke to them these words, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given Me. [19]Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. [20]And teach them to keep every rule that I have given you. And I shall always be with you, every day to the end of the world."

CHAPTER 1

Ministry of John the Baptist

THE beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. [2]As it is written in the prophets, "Attention! I will send My messenger before You (*Malachi* 3:1). [3]His voice will call out in the wilderness, 'Make the way ready for the Lord; make it straight for His feet!' " (*Isaiah* 40:3).

4 John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. [5]People came to him from all over Judea, and from Jerusalem, and John baptized them in the Jordan river when they confessed their sins.

6 John had clothing made of camel's hair, and wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey. [7]In his preaching he said, "One is coming after me who is mightier than I, and I am not even worthy to stoop down and untie His shoestrings. [8]True, I have baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

The Baptism of Jesus

9 Then, one day, Jesus came down from Nazareth in Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. [10]As He stepped out of the water, He saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, came down and rested on Him. [11]And out of the heavens came a voice, "You are My beloved Son. I am well pleased with You!"

Jesus Tempted in the Desert

12 Immediately after this, the Spirit took Him out into the wilderness. [13]He stayed there forty days, while being tempted by Satan. There He was surrounded by wild beasts, but angels ministered to Him.

Jesus Chooses His First Disciples

14 After John had been put in prison, Jesus came up to
Galilee, preaching the Gospel of the kingdom of God. 15"The
time has come," He said, "and the kingdom of God is near
at hand; repent, and believe the Gospel."

16 As He was walking along by the Sea of Galilee, He
saw Simon and his brother Andrew about to drop a large net
into the water, for they were fishermen. 17Jesus said to them,
"Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." 18And
they at once left their nets, and followed Him.

19 He went on a little farther, and saw James, the Son of
Zebedee, and his brother John, both of them in a boat,
mending their nets. 20He called them, too, then and there,
and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired
men, and followed Him.

Jesus Heals the Demoniac

21 They went on to Capernaum. There on the sabbath
He would go into the synagogues and teach. 22People mar-
veled at what He said, because He did not teach as the
scribes, but as One who knew what He was talking about.

23 In one of their synagogues there was a man who had
an unclean spirit. This demon cried out, 24"You Jesus of
Nazareth, what is there between us and You? Have you come
to destroy us? I know well who You are, You Holy One of
God!" 25Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Keep quiet, and come
out of him!" 26The foul spirit threw the man into convul-
sions, then gave a loud shriek as he came out of him.
27Everyone was greatly amazed, and they began to ask one
another, "What is this? What new teaching is this? Why, He
speaks with authority even to the demons, and they obey
Him!" 28And news of Him spread quickly to the whole
surrounding Galilean countryside.

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law

29 With James and John, they left the synagogue and

went directly to the home of Simon and Andrew. [30]Now, Simon's mother-in-law was ill in bed with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. [31]He went to her, took her by the hand and raised her up. And immediately the fever left her, and she waited on them.

Jesus Ministers in Galilee

32 In the evening, at sunset, they brought to Him all who were sick, as well as the demon-possessed. [33]In fact, the whole town had come together at the door. [34]And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, besides casting out many demons. But He did not permit the demons to say anything, for they knew who He was.

35 Very early the next morning, long before daybreak, He got up, left the house, and went off to a lonely spot. where He prayed. [36]But Simon and his companions followed Him. [37]When they found Him, they said to Him, "Everyone is looking for You!". [38]He answered, "Let us go, then, to the neighboring towns and I will preach to them. I came here for that very purpose." [39]And so He went about in all Galilee, preaching in the synagogue and also casting out demons.

The Healing of the Leper

40 Once a leper came to Him. He fell on his knees before Him, and begged, "Oh, if only You will, You can make me clean." [41]Moved with pity, Jesus held out His hand, touched him, and said, "It is My will. Be cleansed." [42]The leprosy was gone at His word; the man was healed. [43]He then sent him away in a hurry, after having given him some very strict orders. [44]This is what He told him, "You must not say anything to anybody about this, but go and show yourself to the priest, and bring along for your cleansing the offering that Moses commanded, as a proof of your healing." [45]Nevertheless, as he departed, he began to tell a great deal about it, so the news spread widely, making it difficult for Jesus to go openly into any town. He stayed, therefore, in the desert places, but still they came to Him from every direction.

CHAPTER 2

Jesus Heals the Paralytic

THEN, after some days, He again went to Capernaum, and the news spread that He was at home. [2]In a short time many people gathered, so that there was no more room for them, not even at the door, and He preached the Word of God to them. [3]And some came, bringing with them a man who was paralyzed, carried by four men. [4]But, on account of the crowd, they could not get near Him. So they removed the roof over the place where He stood, and made an opening through which they lowered the cot on which the paralytic lay.

5 When Jesus noted their faith, He said to the paralytic, "My lad, your sins are forgiven!" [6]There were some scribes sitting there, and they reasoned in their hearts, [7]"Why does this man speak that way? It is blasphemy! Who can forgive sins? Only one, — God."

8 Jesus knew at once in His soul that they were pondering thus within themselves, so He said to them, "Why do you reason about this in your hearts? [9]Which is easier — to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take up your cot, and walk!' [10]And now, to convince you that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins here on earth," He said to the paralytic, [11]"I say to you, Get up, take up your cot, and go home!" [12]And he got up at once, took up his cot, and went out before them all, so that they all were astonished. And they all praised God, and said, "We have never seen the like!"

The Call of Matthew

13 He was taking a walk along the seashore, and again a crowd surrounded Him, and He taught them. [14]Then, as He walked on farther, He saw Levi (*Matthew*), the son of Alphaeus, at work in the tax-office. So He said to him, "Follow

Me." And he got right up and followed Him. [15]Later on, Jesus and His disciples were guests at his house, together with many other tax-collectors and sinners, for many of these followed Him. [16]Some scribes, who were also Pharisees, had seen Him eat together with the tax-collectors and sinners, and so they asked His disciples, "How is it that He eats and drinks together with tax-collectors and sinners?" [17]Jesus overheard the remark, and spoke to them, "Not the well, but the sick, need a physician," he said. "I did not come to call the righteous, but rather sinners, to repentance."

Jesus' Teaching on Fasting

18 The disciples of John and the Pharisees were observing a fast. So they came and said to Him, "Why is it that Your disciples do not fast, whereas John's disciples and the Pharisees do?" [19]Jesus answered them, "Can you expect the wedding guests to fast as long as the bridegroom is still with them? No, while the bridegroom is with them, they cannot fast. [20]But there will come a time when the bridegroom will be taken away, and when that time comes, they will fast. [21]Nobody patches an old garment with a piece of new cloth, for the new patch might tear the old cloth, and thus make the hole bigger. [22]Nor does anyone put new wine into old wineskins, lest the new wine burst the bags, thus spilling the wine and spoiling the bags."

The Charge of Sabbath-Breaking

23 It happened that He was walking through some grain fields on a sabbath, and His disciples plucked some ears of grain as they were following along. [24]The Pharisees said to Him, "Look! Why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" [25]He answered, "Have you never read about David, what he did when he and his men were in need, and hungry? [26]How he went into the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and he ate of the shewbread, which only the priests could lawfully eat, and shared it also with his

companions?" [27]Then He added, "The sabbath was made for the good of man, not man for the sabbath. [28]And the Son of Man is also Lord of the sabbath."

CHAPTER 3

Healing on the Sabbath

AGAIN, He went into a synagogue, where there was present a man with a withered hand. [2]They watched Him to see if He would heal him on the sabbath, so as to have a complaint to bring against Him. [3]To the man with the withered hand He said, "Will you get up, and come forward?" [4]And to the others He said, "Which is right, to do good on the Sabbath, or to do evil? To save a life, or to kill?" They kept silent. [5]He looked around at them in holy wrath, angry because of their hardness of heart. Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" He did so, and his withered hand was restored as strong as the other! [6]The Pharisees present hurried out and met with the Herodians in consultation as to how best to do away with Him.

Healings on the Seashore

7 Jesus withdrew with His disciples to the seashore, but great crowds followed close behind. They came from Galilee and likewise from Judea, [8]also from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and from beyond the Jordan, and from Tyre and Sidon — they came to Him in great numbers because they had heard how much He was doing. [9]He requested His disciples to find a small boat for His use, in case the surging crowd should press Him too hard. [10]He was busy healing many, but the sick people were pressing on, trying to touch Him. [11]And those who had evil spirits, when they saw Him, fell at His feet, and screamed, "You are the Son of God!" [12]He gave them strict orders that they should not tell who He was.

The Call of the Twelve

13 Then He went up onto a mountain, having selected
those whom He wanted along, and they followed Him. [14]He
appointed twelve to be with Him, and to go out to preach
at His command. [15]Also they were to have power to heal
diseases and to cast out demons. [16]To Simon He gave an
added name — Peter. [17]To James and John, sons of Zebedee,
He gave likewise a second name — Boanerges, that is, Sons
of Thunder. [18]The names of the others were: Andrew and
Philip, Bartholomew and Matthew, Thomas and James, the
son of Alphaeus, Thaddeus, and Simon, the Canaanite.
[19]And, finally, Judas Iscariot, who later betrayed Him. They
entered a house.

Jesus' Family Tries to Restrain Him

20 Then, once more a crowd gathered, so that they did
not have time even to eat a bite of bread. [21]When His rela-
tives heard of it, they came over to take Him in charge, for
they said, "He is deranged." [22]But the scribes said, "He is
possessed by Beelzebub. It is by the prince of demons that
He casts out demons."

The Parable of the Divided Kingdom

23 So He called them to Him, and spoke to them, using
a parable. He said, "How can Satan cast out Satan? [24]A
kingdom cannot last if it is divided against itself. [25]Or, can a
home endure if it is divided? [26]So, if Satan has revolted
against himself, he is divided, and must have an end. [27]One
cannot enter a strong man's house and rob him without first
binding him. This done, one can plunder his house at will.

28 "And this is important — the sons of men may obtain
forgiveness for all their sins, and for the blasphemies they
may speak. [29]But if anyone blasphemes against the Holy
Spirit, he will not be forgiven, never in all eternity. The judg-
ment on him is everlasting." [30]This warning was given be-
cause they said, "He has an unclean spirit."

Jesus' Family Arrives

31 His mother and brothers came. They had to stand
outside, but sent word to call Him. 32There was a big crowd
seated around Him when the word came, "Your mother and
brothers are outside, asking for You." 33He replied, "Who
is My mother, and who are my brothers?" 34Then, turning to
those seated around Him, He said, "You are My mother and
brothers. 35For anyone who does God's will is My brother
and sister and mother."

CHAPTER 4

The Parable of the Sower

AGAIN He began to teach by the seaside. And
soon a great crowd had gathered around Him. He therefore
got into a boat, in which He sat near the shore, while the
people were on land, but close to the water. 2He taught
them many things, using stories. He said to them, for
example,

3 "Listen! Once there was a sower who went out to sow.
4Then, as he sowed, some seed fell by the roadside, and the
birds of the air came and ate it up. 5Some fell on stony
ground, where there was not much soil. And, because the
soil was shallow, this sprang up at once. 6When the sun rose,
it was scorched and withered away for lack of root. 7Some
fell among thorns, but the thorns, in growing, choked it, and
it yielded no crop. 8And some fell into good soil, and yielded
a crop, coming up and increasing, producing some thirtyfold,
some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold return. 9Take heed,
you who have ears to hear!"

10 When He was alone again, some people, together with
the disciples, came to ask Him the meaning of the parable.
11He said to them, "You have been allowed to understand
the secrets of God's kingdom, but to the outsiders these

things are presented by means of parables, for it is said,
12"They can see, and do see, but still they do not perceive,
and they can hear, and do hear, but still they do not understand, lest they might be converted, and so get their sins
forgiven' " (Isaiah 6:9, 10).

The Parable of the Sower Explained

13 He then asked them, "Really, can't you see through this parable? How will you ever understand any of the parables? 14Now listen: What the sower sows is the Word of God. 15Those by the roadside are the ones who hear the Word, but Satan comes along immediately and snatches away the Word that was sown in their hearts. 16And, in like manner, the seeds that fell on stony ground are such as accept the Word with joy as soon as they hear it. 17But, since they have no root in themselves, their joy is of short duration, and, if trouble or persecution arises because of the Word, they quickly take offense. 18The seeds that were sown among thorns are such as listen to the Word, 19but the message is choked out by the cares of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and desires for other things, and consequently there is no crop. 20Lastly, the seeds on good soil are such as give ear to the Word, and accept it. They yield a harvest, up to thirty, sixty and a hundredfold."

The Lamp Under the Basket

21 Again, He said, "Is a candle to be put under a bushel basket or under a bed? Rather, should it not be set on a candlestick? 22There is nothing hidden that was not intended to be brought to light again, and there are no secrets that will not be revealed some day. 23Listen, then, if you have ears to hear with." 24Then He added, "But be careful as to what you listen. You will get in return in the same measure as you give. Yes, you will get even more. 25To him who has will be given, but to him who does not have much, even the little he has will be taken from him."

The Parable of the Growing Seed

26 Once more He said, "The kingdom of God is as if a
man put seed in the ground. 27This done, he would go to
sleep and get up again, night and day, without knowing
exactly how the seed would sprout and grow. 28For the earth
of itself brings forth fruit, first the leaf, then the ear, then
the full corn in the ear. 29Then, when the crop is ripe, the
man at once gets ready his sickle, for the harvest time has
come."

The Parable of the Mustard Seed.

30 He spoke yet once more, "To what shall we liken the
kingdom of God? Is there some parable by which we can
compare it? 31Yes, it is like a grain of mustard seed, which,
when sown in the ground, is the smallest of seeds. 32Yet it
grows up and becomes the largest of the herbs, and puts out
great branches so that the birds of the sky can roost under
its shade."

33 He spoke the Word to them by many such stories
which they could understand. 34He never addressed them
without using some parable, but when He was alone with His
disciples, He explained everything to them.

Jesus Stills the Storm

35 In the evening of that day, He said to them, "Let
us go over to the other side." 36The crowd was then dis-
missed, and they took Him with them in the boat where He
was at the time, and also other boats accompanied them.
37A violent windstorm soon came up, causing the waves to
splash into the boat, so that it was fast filling up. 38Mean-
while, He was in the stern, asleep on a cushion there. So
they aroused Him, crying, "Teacher, is it nothing to You
that we are about to go under?" 39He rose up and reproved
the wind, and said to the sea, "Hush, be still!" At once the
wind dropped, and there was a perfect calm. 40"Why are you
fearful?" He asked them. "Have you no faith at all?" 41And
they were greatly awed and amazed, and said to one another,
"Who is this? Even the wind and waves obey Him!"

CHAPTER 5

The Healing of the Gadarene Demoniac

THEY reached the opposite shore of the lake,
the land of the Gadarenes (Gerasenes). [2]As soon as He left
the boat, He was met by a man from the tombs who was
demon-possessed. [3]This man lived there among the tombs,
and they could not keep him bound, even with chains.
[4]Indeed, he had often been bound with shackles and chains,
but he had torn loose the chains and he had broken the leg-
irons, and nobody was strong enough to subdue him. [5]Night
and day, without ceasing, he spent his time in the tombs and
on the mountainside, crying aloud and cutting himself with
stones.

6 But when He saw Jesus from afar off, he hurried to
Him and fell down before Him. [7]Then he cried out with a
loud voice, "What do You want of me, O Jesus, Son of
God, the Most High? I plead with You, in God's name, not
to torment me!" [8]Jesus was then already saying, "Come out
of the man, you foul demon!" [9]He asked the demon, "What
is your name?" "Legion is my name," he answered, "for we
are many." [10]And he entreated Him earnestly not to drive
them out of the country.

[11]There happened to be a large herd of pigs grazing at the
foot of the mountains. [12]The demons then all begged Him,
"Send us to the pigs, that we can enter them." [13]With that,
Jesus let them have their wish. But, no sooner had the demons
entered the animals than they were maddened, and rushed
down the slope into the sea. Some two thousand in number,
they all were drowned in the sea. [14]But the keepers kept go-
ing, and reported the matter to the town and the country
around, so the people came streaming out to see what had
taken place. [15]When they came to Jesus, they found the
former maniac who had had a legion of demons and he was
seated, clothed, and in his right mind. They were terrified.

16Some of the eye-witnesses then gave an account of what had happened to the demoniac and to the pigs. 17But now the people began to beg Him to depart from their neighborhood.

18 When Jesus stepped into His boat again, the former maniac asked if he, too, might go with Him. 19But Jesus would not give him leave. "Rather," said He, "return to your own home, and tell what the Lord has done for you, and what mercy He has shown you." 20So he went back, and began to proclaim in all Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And everyone was full of wonder.

Jairus' Daughter

21 After Jesus had crossed over again in the boat, a large crowd gathered about Him down by the seashore. 22Then Jairus, one of the synagogue leaders, came. When he saw Jesus, he bowed at His feet. 23He begged and pleaded with Him, saying, "My little daughter is on her deathbed. Please come and lay your hands on her, so that she can get well, and live." 24And He went with him. Also much of the crowd followed behind, pressing close to Him.

The Woman Healed of Hemorrhage

25 One of them was a woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years. 26She had suffered a great deal, had tried many physicians and had spent all her money but, instead of being better, she was even worse. 27She had heard about Jesus, and now she was right back of Him in the crowd, and she touched His coat. 28For she reasoned this way, "If I can only touch His clothing, I shall be healed." 29Immediately the flow of blood stopped, and she felt in her body that she was healed and rid of her trouble.

30 Then Jesus, at once aware that power had gone out of Him, turned to the crowd, and asked, "Who touched Me?" 31His disciples said to Him, "Why, You see this crowd jostling You on every side, and yet You ask, 'Who touched Me?' " 32Nevertheless, He kept looking around to discover

who had done it. 33The woman, now trembling with fear but knowing what had happened to her, came forward and fell down before Him, and told Him the whole truth. 34"Daughter," He then said, "your faith has brought the cure. Go in peace, and be free from your illness."

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter

35 Even as He spoke, messengers came from the home of the synagogue leader, and said, "Your daughter is dead. Why bother the Teacher any more?" 36Jesus overheard this remark, and said to the synagogue leader, "Don't worry—only believe."

37 He permitted no one to accompany Him except Peter, James, and John, the brother of James. 38He went straight to the home of the synagogue leader, and found a great hubbub there, people weeping and wailing greatly. 39Then, going into the house, He inquired, "Why is there so much confusion and crying? The child is not dead, but is asleep."

40 They laughed at Him. But He sent them all out, then took the child's father and mother and His disciples with Him, and went into the room where the child lay. 41Then, laying hold of her He said to her, "My child, I say to you, arise!" 42And immediately the twelve-year-old girl got up and walked. They were utterly amazed, in fact, stunned. 43He then gave them strict orders not to let anybody know about this miracle. He told them also to give her something to eat.

CHAPTER 6

Jesus Visits Nazareth

HE THEN left that place and went back to His native town, His disciples also following. 2When the Sabbath came, He went to the synagogue and began to teach. Many who heard Him were struck with astonishment, and said, "Where did He get all this? What is this wisdom that has

been given Him? How can He do such mighty works with
His hands? 3Is He not a carpenter, and the son of Mary, and
the brother of James, and Joses, and Judas, and Simon?
And do not His sisters live here in our midst?" And they
were stirred up against Him. 4But Jesus said to them, "A
prophet is honored everywhere except in his native country,
among his kinsmen, and in his own home." 5So He could not
do any mighty works there, except that He healed a few by
laying His hands on them. 6He was shocked at their unbelief.
But He continued to teach while making a round of the
near-by villages.

The Twelve Sent Out

7 Jesus called the Twelve to Him, and began to send
them out, two by two, and gave them authority over unclean
spirits. 8He told them not to take anything along on their
trips except a staff, — no provision bag, no food or money in
their pockets. 9They could wear shoes, but could not take
an extra coat. 10"Take lodging in the first house you come
to," He said, "and stay there until you leave the town.
11Should any town refuse you a room or a hearing, then,
when you leave it, shake off the dust from the soles of your
feet in protest against it. I tell you for a fact, that on the
Day of Judgment it will be easier for Sodom and Gomorrha,
than for that town." 12Then they set out, and preached that
men must repent. 13They also cast out many demons, and
healed many sick persons, anointing them with oil.

The Death of John the Baptist

14His name was now before the public, and came to the
ears of King Herod. People were saying, "He is John the
Baptist now risen from the dead. That is why He can do
such extraordinary things. 15Others said, "He is Elijah." Still
others said, "He is a prophet, like the prophets of old." 16But
Herod, on hearing all this, said, "It is John, whom I be-
headed. He is risen!"

17 Herod himself had sent out men to seize John, bind
him, and put him in prison. He did this on account of Hero-
dias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. 18John
had told Herod, "It is not lawful for you to live with your
brother's wife." 19So Herodias nursed a hatred against him,
and wanted to kill him, but could not. 20Herod was afraid
of John, for he recognized that he was an upright and holy
man, so he kept him safe. He even liked to hear him preach,
although when he did so, he became much worried.

21 There came an opportune day. On his birthday, Herod
put on a feast and invited his lords, military chiefs, and the
leading men of Galilee. 22The daughter of Herodias came in
and danced before them. This pleased Herod and his guests
immensely. so the king said to the maiden, "Ask me for
anything you want, and I will give it to you." 23He repeated
it, putting himself under oath, "Whatever you may ask for,
I will give you, even to half of my kingdom." 24She went out
and asked her mother, "What shall I ask for?" "Ask for
the head of John the Baptist," was her answer. 25Quickly
she came back and reported, "I want you to give me the
head of John the Baptist on a platter right away."

26 The king became very heavy-hearted, but on account
of his oath and his guests, he could not very well refuse her.
27Therefore he sent one of his bodyguard, with orders to
bring back John's head at once. 28Accordingly, he went and
beheaded him in prison, and brought his head on a platter.
He gave it to the girl, and the girl gave it to her mother.
29When John's disciples heard of it, they came and removed
the body, and laid it in a tomb.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

30 Now the disciples rejoined Jesus, and reported to Him
all that they had done and said. 31So He said to them,
"Come, let us go to some quiet place and rest awhile." The
number of people going and coming was so great that they
hardly got a chance to eat. 32They set out then in the boat,

and went to a secluded place by themselves. [33]The crowd saw them setting out, and many of them recognized Him and hurried to get there on foot, coming also from all the villages, and they arrived there ahead of them and came to Him. [34]Jesus got out of the boat and, when He saw the great mass of people assembled, He had pity on them, for they were as sheep without a shepherd. He then started to teach them a number of things.

35 When it was getting late, the disciples came to Him and said, "This is a lonely place, and it is already late. [36]Tell them to leave, so they can go to the surrounding farms and towns to buy themselves something to eat." [37]"Can't you give them something to eat?" He asked them. They replied, "We could go and buy some forty dollars worth of bread, and give them. Shall we?" [38]"How many loaves do you have on hand?" He asked them. "Go, find out." They did so, and reported, "We have five loaves and two fishes."

39 Then He told them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. [40]And they sat down in groups of fifties and hundreds, in rows. [41]Next, He took the five loaves and two fishes and, looking up to heaven, He asked a blessing. Then He broke the loaves and gave them to His disciples to set before them; and the fishes, likewise, were divided among them all. [42]Everyone ate and all were satisfied. [43]And they gathered up twelve baskets of left-over fragments of bread and fish. [44]The number of people who ate of the loaves was about five thousand.

Jesus Walks on the Water

45 He now had His disciples get into their boat, and start for Bethsaida, while He remained to dismiss the multitude. [46]When He had taken leave of them, He went up the mountain to pray. [47]So, at nightfall, His boat was far out on the lake, while He was still on land alone. [48]Due to a contrary wind, those in the boat were struggling hard at the oars. He saw this. At about three o'clock in the morning He set out

toward them, walking on the sea, intent on joining them. [49]When they saw Him walking on the waves, they thought it was a ghost, and cried out with fear. [50]They all saw Him and were terrified. Immediately He spoke to them, saying, "Be brave! It is I, Myself. Don't be afraid." [51]Then He came up to them and got into the boat, and the wind stopped blowing. Their amazement and wonder were simply boundless. [52]They had not understood the miracle of the loaves, for their hearts were still unmoved.

The Healings at Gennesaret

53 When they had crossed the lake they came to land at Gennesaret, and anchored there. [54]No sooner had they left the boat than people recognized Him. [55]And they hurried off into the whole countryside and began to bring sick people on their pallets to Him, wherever they heard He was. [56]And wherever He went, in village, or town, or country place, they would lay the sick down in the market place, then beg Him to let them but touch the hem of His coat. Everyone who touched Him was healed.

CHAPTER 7

God's Commandments vs. Man's Tradition

THE Pharisees, together with some scribes who had come up from Jerusalem, gathered around Him. [2]They had noticed that some of His disciples had eaten with unwashed hands, and they found fault. [3]For the Pharisees and, indeed, all the Jews, held to a tradition from their forefathers, never to eat without first having washed their hands thoroughly. [4]When they brought something from the market, they would not eat it without first having purified it by sprinkling. They also had many other ancestral customs that they maintained, such as ceremonial washings of cups and pitchers, copper pans, and tables.

5 The Pharisees and scribes, therefore, questioned Him
about it, saying, "Why don't Your disciples observe the
customs handed down, instead of eating their bread with
unwashed hands?" 6"You hypocrites!" He answered them.
"Isaiah surely prophesied fittingly about you when he wrote,
'This people honors Me with their lips, but not with their
heart — it is far from Me. 7It is to no purpose that they
worship Me, for the doctrines they teach are made by man'
(*Isaiah* 29:13). 8You give up the commandments of God
and hold fast to the traditions of men."

9 And He added, "You are clever in making God's com-
mandments of no account, but your traditions must be ob-
served. 10Moses has said, 'Honor your father and your
mother,' and he has also said, 'If one shall speak evil of his
father or mother, let him be put to death.' 11But you say,
'If one says to his father or mother that whatever he has
that might be of use to them is now a gift dedicated to
God.' (*Corban*) 12you henceforth excuse him from doing
anything for his father and mother. 13Furthermore, you make
the Word of God null and void by means of such tradition,
and you have many other similar wicked practices."

14 He again called the crowd to Him, and addressed
them. 15"Listen to Me, all of you," He said, "and get the
meaning of this; it is not what goes into a man from with-
out that defiles him, but, rather, it is what comes out of him;
these are the things that defile him. 16Take heed, therefore,
if you have ears to hear!"

17 When He had gone into the house, away from the crowd,
His disciples asked Him the meaning of the parable. 18"Well,"
He said, "are you, too, without any understanding? Can't
you see that nothing that goes into a man from without
can defile him? 19This is because it does not enter his heart,
but his stomach, from which it passes on until eliminated.
No food defiles. 20What defiles a man," He said, "is, what
comes out of him. 21From within, that is, from the heart,
come man's wicked desires, such as adulteries, fornications

and murders. [22]Also theft, covetousness, malice, deceit, wastefulness, envy, blasphemy, pride and folly. [23]All these evils come from within. They all defile a man."

The Healing of the Syrophoenician Woman

24 He then withdrew from there, and retired to the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon. He stopped at a house and wanted to be unknown, but He could not go unrecognized. [25]There was a woman there whose daughter had an unclean spirit. She had heard about Him, and came and fell at His feet.

26 The woman (a Greek and Syrophoenician by race) begged Him to free her daughter of the demon. [27]But He answered her, "Let the children have their wants satisfied first. It is not right to take the children's bread and give it to the dogs." [28]"True, Lord," she said, "yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs that the children leave under the table." [29]To this He replied, "Because of what you now have said, go your way. The demon has left your daughter." [30]When she came back home, she found it was so; the demon had gone, and the daughter was resting on her bed.

The Healing of the Deaf-Mute

31 He again departed from the regions of Tyre and Sidon, came back to the Lake of Galilee, and went on to the neighborhood of Decapolis. [32]There they brought to Him a man who was deaf and almost dumb, with the request that He would lay His hand on him. [33]He took him aside, away from the multitude; then He put His fingers in his ears, spat, and touched his tongue. [34]Next, He looked up to heaven and said, with a deep sigh, "Be opened!" [35]And his ears were opened right away, and the obstruction that had tied his tongue was loosed, so that he spoke normally.

36 But He forbade them to tell anyone about it. Still, the more He told them not to tell, the more eager they were to do so. [37]The people were much amazed, more so than ever before, and they kept saying, "He has done all things well. He makes the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak!"

CHAPTER 8

The Feeding of the Four Thousand

ONE day, a very large crowd was gathered, but without anything to eat. He then called His disciples to Him, and said, [2]"I am much concerned about the people, because they have now been with Me three days, with nothing to eat. [3]If I should send them home, hungry as they are, they would likely drop by the way, for some of them have come a long distance."

4 "But where," asked His disciples, "can anyone here in the wilderness get bread enough to feed them?" [5]"How many loaves of bread have you?" He asked. They answered, "Seven." [6]He gave orders that the people should sit down on the ground. Then, taking the seven loaves, He gave thanks, broke them into pieces, and gave them to His disciples to distribute among the crowd, and this they did. [7]They had also a few small fishes. These also He blessed, after which He ordered that they should be distributed. [8]They all ate and had their fill. Of the fragments left over they gathered seven baskets full. [9]Those who had eaten numbered about four thousand. Then He dismissed them.

The Pharisees Seek a Sign

10 This done, He entered the boat, together with His disciples, and came across to the neighborhood of Dalmanutha. [11]The Pharisees there began to argue with Him. Just to put Him to a test, they requested from Him a sign from heaven. [12]With a deep-felt sigh He answered, "Why does this generation look for a sign? I assure you that no sign will be given to this generation." [13]Leaving them, He again embarked and went to the opposite shore.

Jesus Warns Against the Leaven of the Pharisees

14 They had forgotten to take bread along. Except for one

loaf, they had no food with them in the boat. [15]He warned them, "Look out! Avoid the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod!" [16]Anxiously, then, they began to discuss among themselves whether He said this because they had no bread. [17]Jesus was aware of this, and therefore said to them, "What makes you discuss the fact that you did not take bread along? Don't you understand? Isn't it clear to you? Is your heart still dull? [18]You have eyes; can't you see? You have ears; can't you hear? And have you no memory? [19]When I broke the five loaves of bread to the five thousand, how many baskets of leftovers did you have? Tell Me." They said, "Twelve." [20]And when I broke the seven loaves to the four thousand, how many baskets of leftovers did you pick up?" They answered, "Seven." [21]Then He asked, "How is it that you do not yet understand?"

The Healing of the Blind Man

22 They came to Bethsaida. A blind man was brought to Jesus, and He was asked to touch him. [23]So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. Next, He put some saliva on his eyes, laid His hands on him once more, and asked him if he now could see anything. [24]He looked up and said, "I see some men, but they look like trees walking." [25]Again Jesus put His hands to the man's eyes, and made him look up. This time his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. [26]And He sent him home again with these words, "Do not go by way of the town. And do not tell any of the townsfolk."

Peter's Confession

27 Then Jesus went out, with His disciples, to the villages near Caesarea Philippi. While on the way there He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" [28]They answered, "John the Baptist, although some say You are Elijah, while others say, one of the prophets." [29]Then He asked, "But you, who do you say that I am?" Peter spoke

up, "You are the Christ!" [30]He then gave strict orders that they must not tell this about Him to anyone. [31]He now began to teach them that the Son of Man must necessarily suffer many indignities, must be disowned by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, that He must be put to death, but would rise again after three days.

32 This instruction He had given openly. Peter tried to draw Him aside, and started to protest against the prophecy. [33]But He turned and, before His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Satan, get behind Me, for your thoughts are the thoughts of men, and not of God!"

Jesus' Conditions of Discipleship

34 He now again addressed the assembled crowd and His disciples in this way, "If anyone wants to be My disciple, he must deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. [35]If he wants to save his life, he shall lose it, but if he wants to lose his life for My sake, and for the sake of the Gospel, he shall save it. [36]What benefit will it be to him if he gains the whole world but loses his soul? [37]And what price would he give in exchange for his soul?

38 "If anyone is ashamed of Me and My teaching in this adulterous and sinful age, the Son of Man also will be ashamed of him when He returns, with the holy angels, in the glory of His Father.

CHAPTER 9

The Transfiguration of the Lord

THEN He foretold, "Some of you now standing here — I am telling you the truth — will surely not die before you see the kingdom of God come with power!"

2 Six days later, Jesus took Peter, James and John with Him up a high mountain, by themselves. And He was changed, transfigured, before them. [3]His clothes became

shining, dazzling, white as snow, whiter than any bleach here on earth could have made them. [4]Then Elijah appeared to them, and Moses with him, and they talked with Jesus.

5 Peter, excited, said to Jesus, "It is good for us to be here. Let us make three dwellings, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." [6]They were all greatly frightened, and Peter scarcely knew what he was saying.

7 Just then a cloud came and overshadowed them, and a Voice out of the cloud said, "This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" [8]Then, all at once, as they looked around, they no longer saw anyone there except themselves, alone with Jesus.

9 When they were coming down from the mountain, He instructed them not to tell what they had seen, until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. [10]This trust they kept to themselves, but wondered meanwhile what was meant by "rising from the dead."

11 They asked Him this question, "The scribes say that Elijah must come first. Why must he?" [12]"True," He said, "Elijah will come first, to put everything in order. And how about the Son of Man? Is it not written that He must suffer much and be rejected? [13]Elijah has already come, I say, and they have done to him just as they pleased, even as the Scriptures said they would" (*Mal.* 4:5,6; *Isa.* 53:3).

The Healing of the Demoniac Boy

14 When they came back to the disciples, they saw a great crowd around them, and the scribes in argument with them. [15]When the people saw Him, they were at once very respectful and hastened up to Him to greet Him. [16]He asked one of the scribes, "What are you arguing about with them?" [17]A man from the crowd answered, "Teacher, my son has a dumb spirit. I was going to bring him to You. [18]Wherever it takes him, it throws him down violently, makes him foam at the mouth and gnash his teeth. His strength withers away. I asked Your disciples to expel it, but they lacked the power to do it."

19 "Oh, this unbelieving generation!" He said. "How long
shall I be with you? How long must I bear with you? Bring
him to Me." [20]They brought the boy to Him. On seeing
Jesus, the demon at once convulsed the boy, so that he fell
to the ground, rolling about in convulsions. [21]"How long has
he been this way?" He asked the father. "From childhood,"
was his answer. [22]And he added, "Often has it thrown him
into both fire and water, so as to destroy him. But oh, if You
can do anything to help us, take pity on us!"

23 Then Jesus said to him, "Can you believe? All things
are possible to the believer." [24]Immediately the father of the
boy cried out, with tears, "Lord, I do believe! Help my un-
belief!" [25]Jesus, noticing that the crowd was pressing in on
them, said to the foul spirit, as He rebuked it, "You dumb
and deaf spirit, I command you, come out of him, and never
again go back!" [26]The demon gave a shriek, threw the boy
into a violent convulsion, and left him. He lay there as if
dead, and many said that he was dead. [27]But Jesus took him
by the hand and lifted him, and he stood up.

28 Later, when He had gone indoors and was alone with
His disciples, they asked Him, "Why could not we expel it?"
[29]He answered them, "Nothing except prayer and fasting will
make that kind come out."

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

30 Leaving that place, they took a trip through Galilee.
But He did not want anyone to know about it. [31]He was busy
instructing His disciples, telling them, "The Son of Man will
be delivered over to men who will kill Him, but after His
death He will rise up again on the third day." [32]But they
did not understand what He meant and were afraid to ask
Him about it.

The Lesson on the Child

33 When they came back to Capernaum and were at home
He asked them, "What were you discussing by yourselves on

the way?" [34]They had been disputing on the way as to which one of them was the greatest, so they said nothing. [35]He called them together and sat down with them, and said, "If anyone desires to hold first place, he should take the last place, and be everyone's servant." [36]Then He took a little child and placed him in their midst. He took him up in His arms, and said, [37]"Whoever receives one of these little ones in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives not only Me but Him Who sent Me."

The Rebuke of Intolerance

38 Answering Him, John spoke up, "Teacher, we saw someone casting out devils in Your name. He was not one of us and, because he was not one of us, we told him to stop it." [39]"Forbid him no more," said Jesus, "for no one who works a miracle in My name can readily say anything bad about me. [40]For one who is not against us must be for us. [41]And I promise that whoever gives you a cup of water in My name, because you are Christ's, shall surely be rewarded.

Jesus Warns of Hell

42 "Whoever is the cause of sin in one of these little ones who believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hung around his neck and he were dropped into the sea. [43]If your hand is a cause of sinning in you, cut it off. You will do better to go into life maimed than, with both hands, to go to hell, where the fire is unquenchable. [44]There the worm never dies, and the fire is never put out. [45]And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut that off, too. For it is better for you to enter life with only one foot, rather than with both feet to be cast into hell, into everlasting fire. [46]The worm never dies there, and the fire cannot be put out. [47]Again, if your eye is the cause of your sin, pluck it out. You will do better in the kingdom of God with one eye, than, having two eyes, to be thrown into hell-fire. [48]Their worm will never die there, and the fire will never be put out.

49 "Everyone will be seasoned with fire, as every sacrifice
is seasoned with salt. 50Salt is a good thing. But if the salt
loses its flavor, how can you make it salty again? Have salt
within you and live in peace with one another."

CHAPTER 10

Jesus' Law of Divorce

SETTING out from that place He came into the outskirts of Judea and crossed over into the land beyond the Jordan. Here, too, people crowded around Him, and here again, as was His custom, He began to teach them.

2 The Pharisees wanted to put Him to a test, so they came to Him with a question, "Is it lawful for a husband to divorce his wife?" 3He answered by asking them, "What command did Moses give as to divorce?" 4"Moses," they said, "allowed a man to put his wife away, if he made out a certificate of divorce." 5"True," said Jesus, in reply, "Moses made that ruling because of your hardness of heart. 6From the beginning of creation God made them male and female. 7A man will, therefore, leave his father and mother and be wedded to his wife, 8so that the two shall be as one flesh. I repeat it, they are no longer two, but one flesh. 9Therefore, what God has joined together, man must not separate."

10 When His disciples came back to the house again, they questioned Him about the same thing. 11He added this, "If a man puts away his wife, and then marries another, he commits adultery against his first wife. 12And, likewise, if a woman divorces her husband and gets married again, she commits adultery."

Jesus Blesses the Children

13 Now they brought little children to Him, that He might lay His hands on them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14When Jesus saw this, He was indignant,

and said to them, "Let the children come to Me, and don't forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. [15]This I say, that whoever does not accept the kingdom of God as a little child, will not come into it at all." [16]Then He took the children in His arms, placed His hands on them, and gave them a blessing.

The Rich Ruler's Question

17 As He was continuing on His way, a man ran up to Him, knelt down before Him, and asked, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" [18]"Why do you call Me good?" responded Jesus. "There is only One who is good — that is God. [19]You know the commandments, of course — 'Do not kill; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not bear false witness; do not defraud; honor your father and your mother' " (*Exodus* 20).

20 "But Teacher," he answered Him, "I have kept all these from my boyhood." [21]As Jesus looked at him, He loved him, but said, "You do lack one thing — Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor. You will then have a treasure in heaven. Then come, take up your cross, and follow Me." [22]This good counsel made the man sad, and he walked away grieved, because he was very rich.

Jesus Warns Against Riches

23 Jesus looked around at His disciples, then said to them, "How hard it is for those who have riches to come into the kingdom of God!" [24]The disciples were surprised at what He said. Jesus then addressed them as "Children," and added, "How hard it is for those who trust in riches to come into the kingdom of God! [25]It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

26 Now they were more startled than ever, and they said to one another, "Who, then, can be saved?" [27]Jesus, looking at them, said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God. All things are possible for God."

28 Peter now began to say, "We gave up all we had, and followed You . . ." 29"True," said Jesus, "and I say, there is no one who has left his home, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for My sake and for the Gospel, 30but who will receive in return, in this life, together with the persecutions, a hundred times the worth of houses, and brothers, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, and, in addition, everlasting life in the world to come. 31But many who are now first will be last, and the last will be first."

Jesus Again Predicts His Death and Resurrection

32 They were now on their way going up to Jerusalem, Jesus leading them on, while His followers were filled with wonder and fear. Once more He took the twelve aside, and started to tell them what was about to happen to Him, 33"As you see," He said, "We are now on the way to Jerusalem. There the Son of Man will be given up to the chief priests and the scribes. They will then condemn Him to death and turn Him over to the non-Jews. 34They will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. But He will rise again on the third day."

The Vain Ambition of James and John

35 James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Him with a request. "Teacher," they said, "we would like to have You give us whatever we ask. Will You?" 36"What is it," He asked, "that you want Me to do for you?" 37They answered, "Let us sit, one of us at Your right hand, and the other, at Your left, in Your glory." 38But Jesus said to them, "You don't understand what you ask. Can you drink the cup that I am drinking, and be baptized with the baptism that I am being baptized with?" 39"Yes, we can," they replied. Jesus then said, "You shall drink, then, from the cup from which I drink, and be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized. 40But you may not sit at My right hand and My left. That is not Mine to give. That is for those for whom it has been prepared."

41 When the ten heard of it, they were angry with James
and John. 42Jesus called them to Him, therefore, and said,
"You know that those who are set to rule over the nations
lord it over them, and that their great leaders parade their
authority. 43Among you it must not be that way. Among you,
on the contrary, it must be that whoever wants to be great
must be your servant. 44And whoever wants to be first among
you must be everyone's slave. 45Just so, the Son of Man did
not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as
a ransom for many."

The Healing of Blind Bartimaeus

46 They came to Jericho, and when He was leaving with
His disciples and a large crowd, Bartimaeus, a blind beggar,
son of Timaeus, was sitting by the roadside. 47When he
heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out,
"Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me!" 48Many spoke
sharply to him, telling him to be quiet, but he kept on shout-
ing the louder, "O Son of David, have pity on me!" 49So
Jesus stopped. He asked someone to call him. They sum-
moned the blind man, saying to him, "Take heart! Come
now! He is calling you." 50He laid his coat aside, got up on
his feet, and came to Jesus. 51In answer to his plea, Jesus
asked, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind
man replied, "Dear Master, Oh, that I might see again!"
52"Go!" said Jesus, "Your faith has healed you." And at
once he recovered his sight, and he followed Jesus on the
way.

CHAPTER 11

Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem

WHEN they were approaching Jerusalem, at
Bethphage and Bethany, near the Mount of Olives, He sent
two of His disciples ahead. 2He gave directions, "Go into
the village ahead of you, and when you come there you will

find a colt on whose back no man has ever sat. Untie the colt and bring it here. [3]And if anybody should ask you, "Why are you doing this?" just say, "The Lord has need of it, and will promptly return it here again."

4 They set out and found the colt tied by an outside door at a street crossing, and they untied it. [5]Some of the bystanders asked, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" [6]And they explained as Jesus had instructed them, and the men let them take it. [7]Then they led the colt to Jesus, placed their coats on its back, and He mounted it. [8]Many people spread their clothing in the road, while others cut branches from the fields and spread them in the way. [9]And those who went ahead of Him, as well as those who came behind, kept shouting, "Hosanna! (*Save now!*) Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! [10]Blessed is the coming kingdom, the kingdom of our father David!"

11 He came to Jerusalem, and went into the temple, where He observed everything. Then, as the hour was getting late, He went out with the twelve to Bethany.

The Barren Fig Tree

12 When they left Bethany the next morning He was hungry. [13]And seeing in the distance a fig tree with some leaves on it, He went up to it to see if, by chance, He could find any fruit on it. But when He reached it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not yet the season for figs. [14]Addressing it, He then said, "Let no one ever eat fruit from you again!" His disciples heard Him say it.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

15 They went on to Jerusalem. Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold there. He also overthrew the tables of the cashiers and the chairs of the dove merchants. [16]He would not allow anyone to carry a vessel through the temple courts. [17]And He reminded them with these words, "Has it not been written, 'My house

shall among all nations be called a house of prayer' (*Isaiah* 56:7)? But you have made it a den of thieves!"

18 When the scribes and Pharisees heard this, they plotted the more as to how to put Him to death. They were really afraid of Him, because the people were excited over His teaching. [19]When night came on, they left the city.

The Need for Faith in Prayer

20 In the morning, as they passed by the fig tree, they saw that it had dried up from the very roots. [21]Peter had not forgotten the day before, and said to Him, "Look, Master, the fig tree that You cursed has withered up!" [22]"Have faith in God!" was Jesus' answer. [23]"I tell you," He continued," if anyone would say to this mountain, 'Move! Throw yourself into the sea!' and have no doubt in his heart, but would be sure that what he said would come to pass, then it would so happen.

24 "Therefore, I say, whenever you ask for anything in prayer, believe that you will receive it, and you will. [25]And, furthermore, when you get up to pray, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him; then your heavenly Father also will forgive you your trespasses. [26]But, in case you do not forgive, then your heavenly Father will not forgive you your trespasses."

Jesus' Authority Questioned

27 He returned to Jerusalem. While He was walking about in the temple there came to Him the chief priests, scribes and elders. [28]"By what authority do You do these things?" they asked. "Who gave You authority to do these things?" [29]"Let Me, too, ask you one question," Jesus said in answer, "and then, if you will answer Me, I will in turn tell you by what authority I do these things. [30]John's baptism — was it from heaven, or from men? Answer Me."

31 They deliberated about it among themselves in this fashion: "If we reply, 'From heaven,' then He will say, 'Why,

then, did you not believe him?' 32But, how can we say, 'From men'?" For they were afraid of the people, because everybody believed that John was really a prophet. 33So they simply said, "We don't know." "All right, then" said Jesus, "neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

CHAPTER 12

The Parable of the Vineyard

HE started again to speak to them in parables, "There was a man," He said, "who planted a vineyard. He set up a fence around it, dug a wine-cellar, built a watch-tower, then rented it out to some tenants, and left the country.

2 At the proper time he sent one of his servants to the tenants to collect his share of the fruit of the vineyard. 3Thereupon they seized him, beat him, and sent him back empty-handed. 4He then sent another on the same errand, but they hit him on the head with stones and also showered him with insults. 5He sent a third servant, but they killed him. Later on he sent many others, some of whom were flogged, while others were murdered.

6 He tried once more. This time he sent his own beloved son, thinking, "They will surely have respect for my son." 7But those tenant-farmers said to one another, "This is the heir! Come, let us kill him, and his inheritance will be ours!" 8Accordingly, they pounced on him and murdered him, and dumped his body outside the vineyard. 9Now then, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and have those tenants punished, and he will give the vineyard to others.

10 "Have you not read this Scripture passage, 'The Stone that the builders rejected was made the Cornerstone; 11it is the work of the Lord, and to our eyes it is most wonderful' " (*Psalm* 118:22, 23)? 12They understood fully that He spoke

this parable against them, and they tried to have Him arrested, but they were afraid of the people. So they gave up and went their way.

Jesus Questioned About Tribute

13 They sent some Pharisees and some of Herod's men to Him to trap Him in His talks. [14]They came and said to Him, "Teacher, we know that You are honest; You are not prejudiced for or against a man; You do not judge by appearances. On the contrary, You teach the way of God in truth. So we ask, Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or is it not? [15]Shall we pay, or shall we not?"

Fully aware of their treachery, He replied, "Why do you try to trip Me? Bring Me a coin that I may look at it." [16]When they brought Him one, He said, "But whose picture is this on the coin, and whose signature?" They said, "Caesar's." [17]Jesus said to them, "Then pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God!" They were astounded at His answer.

The Sadducees Inquire About the Resurrection

18 The Sadducees, who teach that there is no resurrection, came to Him. [19]They, too, had a catch-question, "According to the laws of Moses," they said, "if a man dies, and leaves a wife but no children, then his brother must marry his widow and raise up a family in the dead brother's name.

20 "Here is a case. There were seven brothers. The oldest got married, and died, leaving a widow but no children. [21]The second brother then married her but he, too, died childless. Likewise, the third brother. [22]Indeed, all seven had her as wife, and all died without children. Last of all, the woman died. [23]At the resurrection, therefore, when all shall rise again, whose wife will she be? For each one of the seven had her."

24 "Isn't this your mistake," asked Jesus, "that you do not know the Scriptures, nor the power of God? [25]In the

first place, when the dead rise again, they will be like the angels in heaven, and there will be no marrying or giving in marriage. [26]And, again, as to whether the dead will arise, have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the story of the burning bush, how God spoke to him, declaring, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob' (*Exodus* 3:2-6)? [27]He is, then, the God of the living, and not of the dead. Therefore, you are greatly mistaken."

The Great Commandment

28 One of the scribes who had overheard the argument and felt that He had given them a good answer, then asked Him, "Which commandment is most important of all?" [29]"The most important commandment," said Jesus, in reply, "is this, 'The Lord, our God, is One Lord! [30]And you must love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength' (*Deut.* 6:4, 5). This is the first commandment.

31 "The second is similar in importance, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself!' (*Lev.* 19:18). No other commandment is greater than these."

32 The scribe then remarked, "Teacher, You are right. You have spoken truly. God is One, and there is none beside Him. [33]And to love Him with the whole heart, the whole understanding, the whole soul, and the whole strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, that is much more than all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices."

34 He had answered intelligently; therefore Jesus said, as He looked at him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After this, no one dared to pester Him with catch-questions.

David's Son and David's Lord

35 Jesus, however, while teaching in the temple, raised this question, "How comes it that the scribes call Christ the Son of David? [36]David himself, under inspiration of the Holy

Spirit, once said, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand while I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet" ' (*Psalm* 110:1). [37]So David calls Him Lord. How can He also be His son?" And the great crowd heard Him gladly.

Jesus Denounces the Scribes

38 In the course of His teaching He warned against the scribes. "Be on your guard against them," He said. "They like to parade about in long robes, and to be saluted in the market-places. [39]They occupy the front seats in the synagogues and the highest places at festivals. [40]And under cover of long prayers, they cheat poor widows out of house and home. They will receive a far more severe sentence."

The Widow's Mite

41 Jesus sat down facing the temple treasury and observed the people as they dropped money into the coffer. Many of them were rich and gave liberally. [42]Then a poor widow came along, and gave two little copper coins (mites) — that is, about one cent.

43 Jesus called His disciples to Him then, and said to them, "Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has actually given more than all the others who have put money into the treasury. [44]Why? Because the others gave a portion of their spare money, but she, out of her poverty, gave all she had; yes, even all she had for her living."

CHAPTER 13

Jesus Predicts the Destruction of Jerusalem

ONE of His disciples said to Him as He was leaving the temple, "Look, Teacher, what stones! What buildings!" [2]Jesus said in reply, "Yes, look at these great buildings! And yet, they will be thrown down. There will not be

left one stone on top of another." [3]Later, as He was sitting by Himself up on the Mount of Olives, opposite the temple, Peter and James, John and Andrew, came. [4]They asked Him, "Tell us, when will this happen? What will be the sign as to when all this will take place?"

Signs Preceding the Lord's Return

5 In answering them, Jesus began by saying, "Look out, lest someone deceive you! [6]For many will come using My name. They will say, 'I am the One.' And many will be deceived thereby. [7]Don't be alarmed when you hear of wars and rumors of wars. Such things have to be, but the end is not yet in sight. [8]For nation will rise up against nation, kingdom against kingdom; and there will be earthquakes here and there, and famines, and other troubles. These are the beginnings of the sufferings.

Persecution of the Christians

9 "Look out for yourselves, for you will be tried in the courts and flogged in the synagogues, and brought before governors and kings to give testimony, all on My account. [10]Another thing, the Gospel must first be preached to every people.

11 "And when they take you to trial, don't worry beforehand as to what you should say. When that time comes, speak the words that are given you, for it will not be you who will be speaking, but the Holy Spirit. [12]Brother will give up brother to death, a father his son, and children will rise up against their parents and put them to death. [13]And you will be hated by all men because you bear My name. But everyone who remains faithful to the end will be saved.

The Abomination of Desolation

14 "And when you see the unclean thing that desecrates (spoken of by Daniel, the prophet), standing where it ought not to stand — those who read should take note — then it is

high time that those in Judea should hasten to the mountains. [15]If one is on the housetop, he should not come down into the house, nor should he go in to take anything out of the house. [16]If he is in the field, he must not turn back to get his coat. [17]Alas for those women who are pregnant and those who are nursing children in those days! [18]Pray that your flight may not take place in winter! [19]The distress will be great in those days, greater than ever before since the beginning of God's creation until now, and greater than ever it will be again. [20]No human being can possibly be saved unless the Lord shortens those days. But on account of the elect whom He has chosen, He has shortened the time.

The False Prophets

21 "Then, someone will say to you, 'See there! There is the Christ!' Or, 'See here!' Do not believe him. [22]Many false Christs and false prophets will spring up, and they will use signs and wonders in order to mislead, if possible, even the elect. [23]As for you, take heed. Remember that I have told you all this before the time.

The Return of the Lord in Glory

24 "But in those days, after this time of tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will cease to shine. [25]The stars in the sky will go out and the forces of nature will be in uproar. [26]Then men shall behold the Son of Man riding on the clouds in great power and majesty. [27]And He will send out His angels to gather His chosen people from the four winds, and from the utmost ends of the earth to the remotest bounds of heaven.

The Parable of the Fig Tree

28 "You can learn a lesson from the parable of the fig tree. Thus, when its branches are soft, and begin to put out leaves, you know that summer is near. [29]So also, when you see these things happening, you will know that He is near,

even at the door. [30]I can tell you this for sure, that this generation will not pass away before all these things have taken place. [31]Sky and earth shall pass away, but not My words — they shall never fail. [32]But as to that day, and that hour, that is uncertain. No one knows it, not even the angels in heaven, no, not even the Son. Only the Father knows the time.

Jesus Calls to Watchfulness

33 "Take care, then. Keep watch. Pray. You do not know the time. [34]It is as if a man were to travel abroad. Before leaving, he gives each servant some task to do, with authority, and gives orders to the watchman to keep watch. [35]Watch, therefore, since you do not know when the Master of the house will come, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at dawn, or in the morning. [36]What if He should come suddenly and find you sleeping! [37]So I repeat it, and say to one and all, watch!"

CHAPTER 14

The Conspiracy of the Jewish Rulers

IT was now two days before the Festival of the Passover and of Unleavened Bread, and the chief priests and scribes were plotting how they could, by some cunning trick, take Him and put Him to death. [2]One thing they were agreed on, and therefore kept saying, "It must not take place during the Festival, for a riot might break out among the people."

Mary Anoints Jesus

3 Jesus was at Bethany, at the home of Simon, the leper. As He sat at the table, a woman came in. She had an exquisite bottle of pure perfumed oil, very costly, which she opened and then poured on His head. [4]Some of those present were angry at heart, and murmured, "Why this waste of ointment? [5]Why, it could have been sold for some sixty dollars, and the money have been given to the poor." They found fault with her.

6 "Leave her alone," said Jesus. "Why are you making
trouble for her? She has done a kind deed to Me. 7You will
always have the poor with you, and you can always do them
a good turn, when you feel that way. But you will not always
have Me. 8She did what she could. She came to anoint My
body before its burial. 9So I tell you, that wherever the Gos-
pel shall be preached in the whole world, what she has done
will be told in memory of her!"

Judas Bargains to Betray Jesus

10 Then one of the twelve, Judas Iscariot, went to the
chief priests to betray Him to them. 11They were very happy
to hear it, and promised to give him money; so he watched
for a convenient time to betray Him.

The Preparation for the Passover

12 On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread,
on which the Passover sacrifice was killed, His disciples asked
Him, "Where do you want us to go to prepare the Passover
supper for You to eat?" 13"Go into the city," He said to the
two disciples whom he sent out, "There you will meet a man
carrying a pitcher of water. Follow him. 14Whatever house he
enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks, "Where is the
guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My dis-
ciples?" ' 15He will himself take you up and show you a
large upper room, already furnished. Make ready for us
there."

16 The disciples then set out, came into the city, found
things as He had said, and they prepared the Passover meal.

The Traitor Exposed

17 In the evening He arrived with the twelve. 18Then, as
they were seated at the table and eating, Jesus said, "Truly,
I tell you, one of you — one now eating with Me — is going
to betray Me." 19They were shocked and, one by one, they
asked Him, "Is it I?" "Am I the one?" 20"It is one of

you twelve," He said, "who is dipping bread with Me in the dish. [21]It has to be so, but woe to the one who betrays the Son of Man! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."

The Institution of the Lord's Supper

22 While they were still at the table, Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it into pieces, and gave it to them. He said to them, "Take; eat; this is My body." [23]Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, and they all drank from it. [24]"This is My blood of the New Covenant," He said. "It is shed for many. [25]Truly, I tell you, I shall not again drink of the fruit of the vine till the day that I shall drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

26 So they sang a hymn, after which they went out to the Mount of Olives. [27]Jesus said to them, "You are all going to be offended and forsake Me, as it is written, 'I will strike the Shepherd down, and the sheep will be scattered afar.' (*Zech.* 13:7). [28]But after I shall have risen, I will go before you into Galilee."

29 Peter said, "I will not forsake You, not even if all the others turn away from You!" [30]Jesus said to him, "Indeed, I tell you truly, you are going to deny Me. Today — this very night — before the rooster crows twice, you will have denied Me three times." [31]But he protested the more emphatically, "Even if I had to die with You, I would never, never deny You!" All the others said the same.

Jesus' Threefold Agony in Gethsemane

32 They came to a place by the name of Gethsemane. He said to His disciples, "Sit down here while I pray." [33]He took Peter, James and John with Him, and He began to be deeply distressed and depressed. [34]"My soul is very sad, even to death," He said to them. "Stay here and watch."

35 Going forward a little, He fell on the ground and
prayed that, if it were possible, this hour might pass Him by.
36And He added, "Father, Father! You can do anything. Oh,
take this cup away from Me! Yet — not as I will, but as
You will."

37 He came back and found them sleeping. To Peter He
said, "Simon, are you asleep? Can't you watch with Me one
hour? 38Watch and pray, that you may not be tempted. The
spirit is willing enough, but the flesh is weak."

39 He went away again and prayed, asking the same.
40Then He returned but found them asleep again, and their
eyes were so heavy that they did not know what to answer
Him. 41He came a third time, and this time He said,
"Enough! Sleep and rest some other time. The hour has come.
See, the Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands
of sinners! 42Get up, let us go! Look! My betrayer is draw-
ing near!"

Jesus Betrayed and Arrested

43 At that very moment, while He was still speaking,
Judas, one of the twelve, came up, and with him was a great
mob armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests,
scribes and elders. 44The betrayer had already given them a
signal, namely, "He is the One whom I kiss. Seize Him and
bring Him away securely!"

45 When He came, he went right up to Jesus and greeted
Him, "Master!" and he kissed Him ardently. 46Then they
laid their hands on Him, seizing Him.

47 But one of the bystanders drew his sword and struck
the high priest's servant with it, cutting off his ear. 48Jesus
then spoke to them, "Have you come with swords and clubs
to arrest Me, as though I were a robber? 49I have been in the
temple teaching day after day, but you did not lay hands on
Me. Well, it is done to fulfill the Scriptures."

50 Now all the disciples left Him; they fled. 51There was
one, however — a certain young man — who followed after

Him. He wore only a linen shirt over his bare body. And they laid hold of him, too. 52But, leaving his shirt with them, he ran away naked.

Jesus Before the High Priest and the Sanhedrin

53 They led Jesus straight to the high priest. With him were assembled all the chief priests and elders and scribes, waiting. 54And Peter followed, too, at a long distance, as far as the high priest's courtyard. He sat down with the servants, warming himself near the fire.

55 What the high priest and all the council members now tried to do was to find such evidence against Jesus which would condemn Him to death, but they found none. 56True, there were many who told lies about Him, but their tales did not agree. 57For example, some false witnesses got up and said, 58"We ourselves heard Him say, 'This temple, made by men's hands, I will destroy; and then, in three days, I will build another, not made with hands.' " 59But their testimony, even on this story, did not agree.

60 Finally, the high priest got up before them and questioned Jesus, "Have You no answer to anything? What about these charges they make against You?" 61But He kept silent. He made no defense. The high priest again questioned Him, "Are You the Christ, the son of the Blessed One?" 62"I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of the sky."

63 At this the high priest tore his robe and exclaimed, "What more evidence do we want? 64You have heard the blasphemy. What is now your good judgment?" They all unanimously condemned Him as deserving of death. 65Some then began to spit on Him and, blindfolding Him, they punched Him and demanded that He prophesy. Even the officers hit Him with the palms of their hands.

Peter Denies His Lord

66 Peter was meanwhile in the courtyard below, and one

of the high priest's maid-servants came by. [67]When she noticed Peter, warming himself, she took a good look at him, and said, "You were with Jesus of Nazareth, weren't you?" [68]But Peter said it was not so. "I do not know nor even understand what you are talking about," he declared. He then went out on the porch. Just then the rooster crowed.

[69]But the girl saw him again, and said to the men standing near, "This fellow is one of them." [70]Again he denied it.

A little while afterward the bystanders said to Peter, "You surely are one of them, for you are a Galilean." [71]Then, invoking curses and oaths, he protested, "I do not know this Man you are talking about!"

72 And then the rooster crowed a second time. Peter then remembered the words that Jesus had spoken to him. "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." As Peter meditated on that, he broke down and wept.

CHAPTER 15

Jesus Before Pilate

EARLY the next morning the chief priests held a meeting with the elders and scribes and the whole council, resulting in Jesus being bound, taken away, and given over to Pilate. [2]Pilate also questioned Him. "Are You the King of the Jews?" he asked. And Jesus answered this, "Yes, as you say."

3 The chief priests then piled up many charges against Him. [4]Pilate asked Him, "Have You nothing to say? Listen to the accusations they make against You!" [5]But Jesus gave no further answers, so that Pilate was amazed.

6 It was a custom at the Festival to set free a prisoner at the choice of the people. [7]One of the prisoners was named Barabbas. He had, with some accomplices, committed murder during a riot. [8]The mob, noisily pressing forward, started to ask Pilate to do as he had done before. [9]Agreeing to this,

he asked them, "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?" [10]It was plain to him that the chief priests had had Him arrested through malice. [11]But the chief priests stirred up the mob to ask that Barabbas be set free, instead. [12]Pilate then asked them once more, "What do you want me to do, then, with the Man you call the King of the Jews?" [13]They shouted back, "Crucify him!" [14]"But why?" asked Pilate. "What wrong has he done?" To which they shouted the louder, "Crucify him!" [15]So Pilate, anxious to please the crowd, released Barabbas, but Jesus he flogged, after which he turned Him over to be crucified.

The Crown of Thorns

16 The soldiers then led Him away into the courtyard and up to the governor's palace, where they had called together their whole military unit. [17]Then they arrayed Him in a scarlet robe and placed on His head a crown of thorns which they had made. [18]Next, they began to salute Him thus, "Hail! King of the Jews." [19]Then they hit Him on the head with a pole, spat on Him, and knelt before Him in a mock worship. [20]When they had mocked Him, they took off His royal robe and clad Him once more in His own clothes. This done, they led Him away to be crucified.

21 They then compelled a passerby, one Simon, a Cyrenean, coming from his fields, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry His cross.

22 They brought Him to a place called Golgotha, which means, the Place of the Skull. [23]They offered Him a drink of wine mixed with a drug, but He refused it.

The Crucifixion

24 Then they nailed Him to the cross, and they divided His clothes among them by casting lots for it, to settle what each should take. [25]It was nine o'clock in the morning when they crucified Him. [26]And the accusation against Him was written over Him, "The King of the Jews."

27 With Him they crucified two robbers, one on His right hand, the other on His left. [28]And so the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was counted with the lawbreakers" (*Isaiah* 53:12).

29 People who passed by kept insulting Him, nodding their heads and saying, "Aha! You — the man who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! [30]How about saving yourself? Now come down from the cross!" [31]Likewise the chief priests and scribes made sport of Him among themselves, remarking, "Others he saved, but Himself he cannot save! [32]The Christ? The King of Israel? The idea! If so, let him come down from the cross, so that we may see it and believe." Even those who were crucified with Him reproached Him.

33 At twelve o'clock, darkness spread over the whole earth, lasting till three o'clock. [34]At three o'clock Jesus gave a loud cry, saying, "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" In translation this means, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

35 When they heard it, some of those present said, "Hark! He is calling Elijah." [36]One of them then ran to fill a sponge with vinegar. He fastened it to a stick and held it up to Him to drink, saying, "Let us now see if Elijah will come and take him down!"

37 Jesus, however, cried out again and gave up His spirit. [38]And the curtain in the temple was parted in two, from top to bottom.

39 There was a captain who stood opposite Him. When he heard His outcry and saw Him die, he exclaimed, "Surely, this Man was the Son of God!"

40 At some distance, there were also women looking on. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary, the mother of James the Less and Joseph, and Salome. [41]When He was in Galilee these used to go with Him and minister to Him. There were also many other women who had come up to Jerusalem with Him.

The Burial of Jesus

42 It was already evening. And it was Preparation Day —
that is, the day before the sabbath. 43Then Joseph of Ari-
mathea, a respected councilor who himself was expecting to
see the reign of God, came and took courage to go to Pilate
and asked him for the body of Jesus. 44Pilate was in doubt
as to whether He was dead so soon, and so he called in the
captain to find out if He were dead, and how long.

45 When he had this information from his captain, he let
Joseph take the body. 46He took Him down from the cross
and wrapped His body in a sheet of fine linen he had bought.
Then he laid Him in a tomb that had been hewn out of the rock.
Finally, he rolled a stone before the entrance to the tomb,
47and Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, saw
where they laid Him.

CHAPTER 16

The Resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ

WHEN the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene
and Mary, the mother of James, and Salome bought sweet-
smelling spices and went to anoint Him. 2They arrived at
the tomb very early on the first day of the week. The sun
had just risen. 3They were saying to one another, "But who
will roll away the stone for us from the entrance to the
tomb?" 4But, when they looked, they saw that the stone, a
large one, had been rolled away.

5 They then went into the tomb and were much frightened
to see a young man sitting there, to the right, dressed in a
white robe. 6"Have no fear," he said. "You are looking for
Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not
here! See, here is the place where they laid Him. 7But go,
and tell His disciples — and Peter — that He will go before
you into Galilee. There you will see Him, as He told you."

8 They hurried out quickly and fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered. They did not tell anyone, for they were afraid to do so.

Jesus' Post-Resurrection Appearances

9 He had risen early on the first day of the week. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, from whom He had driven seven evil spirits. 10She went and told it to those who had been with Him, as they sat in grief and tears. 11Still, though they heard that He was living and had been seen by her, they did not believe it.

12 After this He appeared again, as a stranger, to two of them as they were walking along, going into the country. 13These two then went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe their story.

14 Later, He appeared to the eleven as they were eating their meal, and He reproached them for their lack of faith and their hardness of heart, for they would not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.

Jesus' Last Message

15 He said to them, "Go into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to every person. 16He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17These signs will go with those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak in new languages. 18They will take up snakes; they will drink poison without harm; and they will lay their hands on the sick and make them well again."

The Ascension

19 So, after He had spoken these words to them, the Lord was taken up into heaven and took His seat at the right hand of God. 20After this they went out and preached wherever they went. The Lord was with them and confirmed the Word by the miracles that went with it. Amen.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

SEVERAL writers have already told the story of what has taken place among us. [2]Some of them had from the beginning been eyewitnesses of what they wrote about, and afterwards were ministers of the Word. [3]It has seemed good to me that I, too, should write a factual account in a connected way, after having first carefully investigated all the details from the start. And it is for you, most worthy Theophilus, that I am doing it. [4]You may thus be sure that what you have been taught is true.

The Birth of John the Baptist Foretold

5 In the days when Herod was king of Judea there was a certain priest, Zacharias by name, of the order of Abijah, who was married to Elizabeth, a descendant of Aaron. [6]In God's eyes they were righteous, for they kept all His commandments and rules; they were blameless. [7]But they were childless, for Elizabeth was barren, and they were now both advanced in years.

8 One day, when it was his turn, Zacharias went on duty as a priest before God. [9]According to the custom among the priests, it fell to his lot to go into the Lord's temple and burn incense. [10]Meanwhile, the whole congregation stood outside, praying during the hour of sacrifice.

11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared before him, at the right of the altar where the incense was burning. [12]Zacharias was bewildered at the sight, and terror-stricken. [13]"Do not be afraid, Zacharias," said the angel to him. "Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and shall call his name John. [14]He will be a joy and great delight to you, and many will rejoice that he was born. [15]For he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He will never

touch wine or strong drink. But he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his very birth. [16]Through him, many of the children of Israel will be turned back to the Lord, their God. [17]He will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, uniting the hearts of the fathers and their children, teaching the wisdom of the righteous to the disobedient, and preparing his people to get ready for the Lord."

The Punishment for Doubting

18 "But," said Zacharias to the angel, "how can I be sure of this? You see that I am an old man now, and my wife is also advanced in age." [19]The angel answered, "My name is Gabriel, and I stand before God's throne. He has sent me to talk to you, to tell you this good news. [20]Listen! Since you have not believed my message, you are going to be unable to speak till the day this thing happens. The words I have spoken will be fulfilled in due season."

21 Meanwhile the people outside were puzzled over why Zacharias delayed so long in the temple. [22]When he came out, he could not speak, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. He tried to speak to them by signs, but remained speechless.

The Reward for Believing

23 After this, when his term of duty had come to an end, Zacharias went back to his own home. [24]Then, some time later, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and kept herself in seclusion for five months. She said, [25]"It is the Lord who has done this to me. He has looked on me with favor, and has taken away my disgrace in the eyes of men."

The Annunciation to Mary

26 Six months afterward, God sent His angel Gabriel to a town in Galilee, named Nazareth. [27]He came to a virgin who was to be married to Joseph, a descendant of David. Her name was Mary. [28]As the angel came he greeted her,

"Rejoice, you chosen one! The Lord be with you! Blessed are you among women!"

29 When she saw him, she was perplexed by his greeting, and she tried to think what it could mean. 30"Be not afraid," the angel said to her. "Mary, you have found favor with God. 31Listen! You are going to give birth to a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus! 32He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest! And the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end!"

34 Mary then asked the angel, "How can this come about, for I am not married?" 35The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore, the Holy Child born of you will be called the Son of God."

36 The angel said, "Your relative Elizabeth, old as she is, also is going to have a child. She who was considered sterile is now in the sixth month of her pregnancy. 37Nothing is impossible with God!"

38 Then Mary said, "So be it! I am willing to be the Lord's handmaid. Let it be to me as you say." Then the angel went his way.

Mary's Visit to Elizabeth

39 Soon after this Mary set out and hurried away to a village in the highlands of Judea. 40There stood the house of Zacharias. She entered it and embraced Elizabeth. 41But no sooner did Elizabeth hear Mary's greeting than she felt her babe leap within her; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42Then she said, with great feeling,

"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is your Child! 43Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord comes to see me? 44The moment I heard your greeting, my baby jumped for joy within me. 45Now, blessings be on her who has believed, for what the Lord has promised her will surely come to pass!"

The Magnificat

46 Then Mary spoke up, "My soul magnifies the Lord,
47and my spirit rejoices in God, my Saviour. 48He looked with
favor upon me, His handmaid of lowly position, so that from
now on all generations will call me blessed! 49The Almighty
has done wondrous things to me, and His name is holy.
50In every generation, His mercy is on those who revere Him.
51With His arm He has done mighty works. He has scattered
those who are proud at heart and conceited. 52He has de-
throned kings; He has exalted the lowly. 53He has filled the
hungry with good food. He has turned away the rich empty-
handed. 54He has helped His servant Israel, remembering
to be merciful. 55This He promised to our forefathers: to be
merciful to Abraham and his race forever."

56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth about three months, then returned to her home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

57 When the time came that Elizabeth should have a child, she gave birth to a son. 58And when the neighbors and relatives heard how wonderfully the Lord had shown His mercy toward her, they came and joined her in rejoicing. 59He was to be circumcised on the eighth day, and when they came together to do this, they wanted to call him Zacharias after the name of his father. 60His mother objected, and said, "No. He is to be called John." 61"But," they said, "none of your relatives has ever been called by that name."

62 So they made signs to the boy's father, asking what name he wanted him to have. 63He asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "John is his name!" They were all astonished. 64And at that very moment his ability to speak was restored, and he spoke, giving praise to God!

65 Then fear came upon all the neighborhood, and the news of what had happened was talked about in all that hill country of Judea. 66All who heard of it kept it in mind,

thinking, "Just what is this boy going to become?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zacharias' Prophecy

67 Zacharias, the father, filled with the Holy Spirit, then prophesied, saying,

68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel! He has visited
His people and brought them salvation. 69He has raised up
for us a Horn of Salvation in the house of David. 70This has
been told us by the lips of His holy prophets, again and
again from the beginning of time. 71Salvation, yes, from our
foes, from all who hate us. 72May He continue to us the
mercy shown to our fathers, and still remember His Holy
covenant. 73He gave an oath to Abraham, our father, to
grant us that, 74being saved from the hand of our enemies,
we should serve Him without fear 75and live, holy and up-
right, in His presence all the days of our lives.

76 "And you, my little son, you will be called the Prophet
of the Highest, for you will go before the face of the Lord
to prepare His way. 77You will give His people knowledge
of salvation through the forgiveness of sins. 78All this is be-
cause of the tender mercy of our God. And so a new day
from on high will dawn on us. 79It will give light to those
who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death. It will di-
rect our feet into the way of peace."

80 The boy John grew up and developed, strong in spirit. He lived in the wilderness until the time he made his public appearance before Israel.

CHAPTER 2

The Birth of Jesus

AT that time an order was sent out by Augustus, the emperor, that a census should be taken of the whole empire. 2This first census took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

3 So, everyone went to his own native town to register.
4Joseph, also, being one of David's descendants, made the
trip to David's city, Bethlehem in Judea, from Nazareth in
Galilee. 5He went there to register himself and Mary, his
wife-to-be, who was soon to have a child.

6 And while they were there the time came for her child
to be born. 7She gave birth to a Son, her First-born, wrapped
Him in swaddling-clothes and laid Him in a manger, because
there was no room for them in the inn.

The Angelic Message

8 In that same region there were shepherds who were
staying out in the open and keeping watch over their flocks
by night. 9Then, see! An angel stood by them, and the glory
of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly ter-
rified. 10But the angel spoke to them, saying,

"Don't be afraid. I come to bring you good news of great
joy to all the people. 11It is this: In the city of David there
has been born to you today a Saviour. He is Christ, the Lord.
12This is the sign for you to go by: You will find a baby
wrapped in swaddling-clothes, and lying in a manger."

13 Then suddenly there was by the side of the angel a
multitude of the heavenly host of angels, all praising God,
saying, 14"Glory to God in the highest! And on earth, peace
to men of good will."

The Visit of the Shepherds

15 After the angels had left them and had gone back to
heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go now to
Bethlehem and see for ourselves this thing the Lord has told
us about." 16So they hurried to Bethlehem and found Mary
and Joseph, as well as the Child in the manger. 17And when
they had seen the Baby, they began to tell what had been
told them about Him. 18Those who heard what the shep-
herds had to say, were amazed. 19But Mary treasured all
their words in her heart, and gave them much thought.

[20]Then the shepherds went back to their flocks, giving glory and praise to God for all the things they had heard and seen, exactly as it had been announced to them.

The Presentation of Jesus

21 At the end of eight days the Child was circumcised, and was called Jesus, the name given Him by the angel before He was born. [22]And when the time of their purification was at an end, as directed by the Mosaic law, they took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. [23]For it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every mother's first-born male child shall be set aside as consecrated to the Lord." [24]They were also to give an offering of two turtle doves, or two young pigeons, as commanded by the law of the Lord.

Simeon's Prophecy

25 There was then a man in Jerusalem by the name of Simeon. He was an upright, pious man, patiently expecting the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on Him. [26]And the Holy Spirit revealed to him that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Anointed. [27]So, full of the Spirit, he came to the temple when the parents brought the Child Jesus in to circumcise Him, as was the custom of the law. [28]He took Him in his arms and praised God, and said:

29 "Now let Your servant die in peace, O Lord, according to Your word. [30]My eyes have now seen Your Salvation. [31]This You have made ready in the sight of every people: [32]It is a Light of revelation to the heathen, and the Glory of Your people Israel!"

33 His father and mother were filled with wonder at the things said about Him. [34]Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His mother, "This Child is destined to bring about the fall and rise of many in Israel, and to be a controversial figure. [35]And as for you, a sword will pierce your soul. All this shall be so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

The Adoration of Anna

36 There was also a prophetess named Anna, a daughter
of Phanuel and of the tribe of Asher. She was an elderly
woman, having had seven years of married life, and was now
a widow, about eighty-four years old. 37She did not leave
the temple, but stayed there serving night and day in fastings
and prayer. 38Just at that time she came up and gave praise
to God, and told about the Child to all in Jerusalem who
were longing for salvation.

The Return to Nazareth; Jesus in the Temple

39 After Joseph and Mary had done everything that the
law asked of them, they went back to their own town, Naza-
reth in Galilee. 40The Child grew and became strong in spirit,
being filled with wisdom, and God's blessing rested on Him.

41 Every year His parents would go up to Jerusalem to
attend the Passover festival. 42So, when He was twelve years
old, they went to Jerusalem again to make the customary
visit. 43And when the festival came to an end, they set out
for home but without their knowing it, the boy Jesus stayed
behind in Jerusalem. 44Supposing Him to be somewhere in
the group, they went a whole day's journey before they began
to look for Him among their relatives and acquaintances.

45 Not finding Him, they went back to Jerusalem and
continued the search for Him. 46Three days later they found
Him. He was in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teach-
ers, both listening to them and asking them questions. 47All
His hearers were amazed at His intelligence and answers.
48His parents also were much surprised when they saw Him
there, and His mother said to Him, "My Son, why have You
done this to us? Your father and I have been greatly worried,
looking for You." 49"But why were you searching for Me?"
He answered them. "Don't you know that I should be about
My Father's business?" 50These words, however, were be-
yond their understanding. 51But He went back with them to
Nazareth, and He continued to obey them. And His mother

kept all these things stored up in her heart. 52Meanwhile, Jesus grew in mind and body, and in favor with God and men.

CHAPTER 3

The Ministry of John the Baptist

IN the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberias, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was king of Galilee, his brother Philip was king of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was ruler of Abilene. 2And Annas and Caiaphas were high priests.

At that time the Word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, then living in the wilderness. 3And so he went out into all that region around the Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 4The prophet Isaiah in his writings speaks of this: "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way for the Lord! Straighten out His paths. 5Let every valley be filled up, and every mountain and hill be leveled, and the crooked places be straightened out, and the rough roads be made smooth! 6Then all mankind may see the Salvation of God' " (*Isaiah* 40:3-5).

7 To the crowds of people who came out to him to be baptized by him, he would say, "You children of vipers! Who warned you to try to escape from the coming punishment? 8You say that you are sorry? Produce the fruits of repentance! Don't begin to say to yourselves, 'Abraham is our father.' I tell you that God can raise up children to Abraham out of these stones. 9Already now the axe is put to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that does not bear good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire."

10 "But what shall we do, then?" the crowd asked him. 11"If you have two shirts," he answered, "then share with

him who has none. If you have food, you must share in the same manner."

12 There were also tax-collectors who came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13He answered, "Don't collect more than you have a right to take." 14And soldiers, also, questioned him, "And we, what must we do?" To them he said, "Don't mistreat anyone, nor make false charges against them, and be content with your pay."

15 The people were now full of expectation, and wondering in their hearts whether or not John himself might be the Christ. 16But John answered this, speaking to all, "As for me, I baptize you with water, but One is yet to come who is mightier than I, and I am not worthy to untie His shoestrings. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. 17He holds His winnowing fan in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean His threshing floor. He will gather His wheat into His granary, but He will burn the chaff in unquenchable fire."

18 With these and many other words he exhorted the people, and preached the glad tidings to them. 19He rebuked King Herod because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, as well as for all the other wicked deeds that Herod had done. 20To all his evil acts he added one more — he shut up John in prison.

The Baptism of Jesus

21 While the people were all being baptized, Jesus also was baptized. He was praying when heaven opened, 22and the Holy Spirit came down upon Him in a bodily form, like a dove, and a voice out of heaven spoke, "You are My Beloved Son. I am well pleased with You!"

The Genealogy of Jesus, Through Mary

23 Now Jesus was about thirty years of age when He began His ministry. He was commonly understood to be the

son of Joseph, who was the son of Joseph, who was the son of Eli. [24]Eli was the son of Matthat the son of Levi, Levi the son of Melchi, Melchi the son of Jannai, Jannai the son of Joseph. [25]Joseph was the son of Mattathias, Mattathias the son of Amos, Amos the son of Nahum, Nahum the son of Esli, Esli the son of Naggai. [26]Naggai was the son of Maath, Maath the son of Mattathias, Mattathias the son of Semein, Semein the son of Joseph, Joseph the son of Joda. [27]Joda was the son of Johanan, Johanan the son of Resam, Resam the son of Zerubbabel. And Zerubbabel was the son of Salathiel, Salathiel the son of Neri, Neri the son of Melchi. [28]Melchi was the son of Addi, Addi the son of Cosam, Cosam the son of Elmadam, Elmadam the son of Er. [29]Er was the son of Jesus, Jesus the son of Eliezer, Eliezer the son of Jorim, Jorim the son of Matthat, Matthat the son of Levi. [30]Levi was the son of Symeon, Symeon the son of Judah, Judah the son of Joseph, Joseph the son of Jonam, Jonam the son of Eliakim. [31]Eliakim was the son of Melea, Melea the son of Menna, Menna the son of Mattatha, Mattatha the son of Nathan, Nathan the son of David. [32]David was the son of Jesse, Jesse the son of Obed, Obed the son of Salmon, Salmon the son of Nahshon. [33]Nahshon was the son of Amminadab, Amminadab the son of Arni, Arni the son of Hezron, Hezron the son of Perez, Perez the son of Judah. [34]Judah was the son of Jacob, Jacob the son of Isaac, Isaac the son of Abraham. Abraham was the son of Terah, Terah the son of Nahor. [35]Nahor was the son of Serug, Serug the son of Reu, Reu the son of Peleg, Peleg the son of Eber, Eber the son of Shelah. [36]Shelah was the son of Cainan, Cainan the son of Arphaxad, Arphaxad the son of Shem, Shem the son of Noah. Noah was the son of Lamech. [37]Lamech was the son of Methuselah, Methuselah the son of Enoch, Enoch the son of Jared, Jared the son of Mahalaleel, Mahalaleel the son of Cainan. [38]Cainan was the son of Enos, Enos the son of Seth, Seth the son of Adam. Adam was the son of God.

CHAPTER 4

The Temptation of Jesus

JESUS was full of the Holy Spirit when He returned from the Jordan, and by the Spirit He was led into the wilderness. [2]There, for forty days, He was tempted by the devil. During those days He ate nothing, and He was hungry when they came to an end. [3]The devil then said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." [4]"It is written," said Jesus in reply, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every Word of God" (*Deut.* 8:3).

5 The devil then took Him up on a high mountain, and in a moment he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. [6]And the devil said to Him, "All this power and splendor has been handed over to me, and I can give it to whomever I please. [7]If only You will worship me, I will give it all to You." [8]Jesus answered, "Get behind Me, Satan! For Scripture says, 'You shall worship the Lord, your God, and only Him shall you serve!' " (*Deut.* 6:13).

9 Next, the devil took Him to Jerusalem and set Him on the very top of the temple. Then he said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, jump down from here! [10]You know that Scripture says, 'He will give His angels orders to take care of You.' [11]And again it says, 'They will bear You up on their hands, so that You shall not strike Your foot against a stone' " (*Psalm* 91:11, 12). [12]"Yes," said Jesus, "but Scripture says also this, 'You shall not tempt the Lord, your God!' " (*Deut.* 6:16).

13 Then, when all these trials were finished, the devil left Him for a time.

Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

14 Jesus went back to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and rumors about Him began to circulate everywhere in that

region. [15]He taught in their synagogues and received much
praise on all sides. [16]He came also to Nazareth, where He
had been brought up. On the sabbath, as was His custom,
He went to the synagogue and stood up to read. [17]The book
given Him was that of Isaiah, the prophet, and the place He
turned to was a prophecy, [18]"The Spirit of the Lord is upon
Me. Therefore He has anointed Me to preach the Gospel to
the poor. He has sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to tell
captives they can be free and the blind that they can once
more see, and to give liberty to the oppressed. [19]In short, to
say that the year of the Lord's favor is here!" (*Isaiah*
61:1, 2).

20 He shut the book, gave it back to the attendant, and
sat down, while the eyes of everyone in the synagogue kept
watching Him. [21]He began His message in this way, "Today
this Scripture is being fulfilled in your hearing."

22 They all wondered at the words of grace that fell from
His lips, and said so, but somebody also remarked, "Is he
not Joseph's son?"

23 He told them, "There is a proverb that you will, no
doubt, apply to Me. It is this, 'Physician, heal Yourself,' here
meaning, 'Do here in Your own countryside what we hear
that You have been doing in Capernaum!' [24]To this I say,
It is a fact that no prophet is accepted in his own country.
[25]It is also true that in the days of Elijah, when there was
no rain for three years and six months and when there was
a great famine throughout the land, there were many widows
in Israel. [26]Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, except
to a widow lady at Zarephath, in the land of Sidon. [27]Like-
wise, at the time of Elisha the prophet, there were many
lepers in Israel, and yet not one of them was made clean
except Naaman the Syrian."

28 When the people in the synagogue had heard His
message, they were furious. [29]They got up and drove Him
out of town. They led Him up to the brow of the high hill
on which their town had been built, intending to hurl Him

headlong over the cliff to His death. [30]But He escaped in the crowd, and went His way.

Jesus Casts Out Demons at Capernaum

31 He went down to Capernaum, a town of Galilee, and taught there on the sabbath. [32]People were astonished at His teaching, because His Word had such authority. [33]One of the men in the synagogue there had an unclean spirit and he called out with a loud voice, [34]"Aha! You Jesus of Nazareth, what do You want of us? Have you come to destroy us? I know well Who You are, You Holy One of God!" [35]Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Keep still! Come out of him at once!" The demon then threw the man down before them, and came out of him without hurting him at all.

36 The bystanders were much astonished and said to one another, "What sort of Word is this? Why, He speaks to the unclean spirits with authority and power, and they come out at His Word!" [37]The news about Him went out to every nook and corner of that region.

Peter's Mother-in-Law Healed

38 When He left the synagogue He went to Simon's home. There Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever. And they asked Him to help her. [39]He went over to her, rebuked the fever, and it left her.

Jesus' Further Ministry at Capernaum

40 At sunset all who had relatives and friends ill with any sort of disease brought them to Him, and He healed them by laying His hands on them, one by one. [41]Many of them were demon-possessed, and as the foul spirits were driven out of them, they cried out, "You are Christ, the Son of God!" But He rebuked them and would not let them speak, for they knew He was the Christ.

42 At daybreak He left the house and went to a desert place. A crowd of people kept looking for Him. They finally

caught up to Him and wanted to keep Him from leaving them. 43But He told them, "I have to go also to other towns to preach the Gospel of the kingdom of God. It was for this that I was sent out." 44And so He went on preaching in the synagogues of Galilee.

CHAPTER 5

The Miraculous Supply of Fish

IT happened, as He was standing by the lake of Gennesaret, that a crowd was pressing in on Him, wanting to hear the Word of God. 2He noticed two boats lying on the shore, whose fishermen owners had left them while they were cleaning their nets. 3He stepped into the boat which belonged to Simon, and asked him to push out a little from the shore. Then He sat down and continued to speak to the crowd from the boat.

4 When He had finished speaking He said to Simon, "Push out into deeper water and let down your nets for a catch." 5Simon answered Him, "Master, we have worked all night but have caught nothing. Yet, at Your bidding, I will let down the net again." 6He did so and caught a great shoal of fish, so many that the net was about to break. 7They beckoned to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They came, and the fish filled both the boats so that they were about to sink. 8When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the feet of Jesus, and said, "Leave me, Lord, for I am a sinful man!" 9Holy fear had taken hold of him and his companions at the catch of fish they had made. 10This was likewise true in regard to James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were Simon's partners.

But Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid. From now on you will be catching men!" 11So they brought their boats to land, left everything, and followed Him.

The Healing of the Leper

12 Now it happened as Jesus came to one of the towns, that a man full of leprosy saw Him and fell down on his face before Him, pleading, "O Lord, if You only will, You can make me clean." [13]Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I will. Be made clean!" At that very moment the leprosy left him. [14]Then He counseled him not to tell anyone, but this he should do: First, he should go to the priest and show himself, and next, in proof of his cure, he should bring the offering for cleansing as Moses had commanded. [15]Nevertheless, His fame spread even more widely, so that great crowds came to hear Him and to be healed by Him. [16]At times, however, He would retire into the desert to pray.

The Healing of the Paralytic

[17]One day, as He was teaching, He had before Him a number of Pharisees and law teachers who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea, and also from Jerusalem. And the power of God was with Him to heal. [18]Then some men came along carrying a paralyzed man on a cot, and they tried to get in to place the invalid before Him. [19]But there was no way of getting him in, on account of the crowd. So they climbed up on the roof, removed the tiles, and let him down, with his cot, into their midst right before Jesus.

20 On seeing their faith, He said to him, "Man, your sins are forgiven you!" [21]At this, the scribes and Pharisees began to wonder, thinking, "Who is this man who talks so blasphemously? Who, except God alone, can forgive sins?" [22]Jesus understood what they were thinking about, so He said to them, "Why are you debating this in your hearts? [23]Which is the easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'? [24]But in order that you may know that the Son of Man has authority here on earth to forgive sins" — He spoke to the paralytic — "I say to you, Arise, pick up your cot, and go home!" [25]And immediately he stood

up, took the cot on which he had been lying, and left for his home, glorifying God.

26 And everyone there was amazed, and they praised God. They were filled with awe and kept saying, "We have seen strange things today."

The Call of Matthew

27 After this He went out and noticed a tax-collector, Levi by name, seated in his office. He said to him, "Follow Me!" 28And he got up, left everything, and followed Him. 29Then Levi put on a great reception for Him at his house, at which there were many tax-collectors and other guests seated at the table with them.

Jesus Answers a Complaint about Fasting

30 The scribes and Pharisees murmured at this and complained to His disciples, "Why do you eat with tax-collectors and sinners?" they asked. 31And Jesus said to them, in reply, "Those who are well do not need a doctor, but rather those who are sick. 32I have not come to invite the righteous to repentance, but sinners."

33 They asked Him another question. "The disciples of John and the Pharisees fast often and pray much, but your disciples eat and drink. Why is this?" 34Jesus answered, "Can you make the wedding guests fast while the Bridegroom is with them? 35No, but there will come a day when the Bridegroom will be taken away, and when that time comes they will fast."

The Parables of the Garment and the Bottles

36 He continued by telling them a parable. "Nobody takes a piece from a new coat and patches an old coat with it, for in so doing he would not only spoil the new coat, but also will find that the piece from the new does not match the old. 37And nobody puts new wine into old wine-skins, for then the new wine would burst the bottles and run out, and the bottles would be worthless. 38New wine has to be

put into new wineskins, always. Thus both are preserved.
[39]And no one, after drinking old wine, wants new wine right after, for he says, 'The old is better.' "

CHAPTER 6

The Charge of Sabbath-breaking

ONCE on the Sabbath Jesus passed through some grain fields, and His disciples plucked some ears, rubbing them in their hands and eating them. [2]But some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why do you do what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" [3]In answer, Jesus asked, "Have you not read what David did when he and his men were hungry? [4]How he went into the house of God and took the presentation loaves and ate, besides giving His companions to eat? It was lawful only for the priests to eat this bread." [5]Then He said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord also of the Sabbath!"

The Healing of the Withered Hand

6 On another sabbath He went into a synagogue and began to teach. There was a man there whose right hand was withered. [7]And the scribes and Pharisees were watching Him, to see if He would heal on the sabbath. What they wanted was an accusation to bring against Him. [8]He knew what they were thinking, and He spoke to the man with the withered hand, "Arise, and come forward." He got up and stood there.

9 Jesus then said to them, "I want to ask you whether it is right to do good on the sabbath? Or to do evil? To save life, or to destroy?" [10]Then, after having looked at each one for a reply, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand!" He did so and his hand was at once restored, as sound as the other. [11]But they were overcome with mad fury and talked it over as to what they should do to Jesus.

Jesus Chooses His Disciples

12 One day He went up on a mountain to pray, and He
spent the whole night there in prayer to God. 13The next day
He called His disciples to Him, twelve of whom He selected,
and called apostles. 14These were: Simon, whom He also
called Peter, and Andrew, his brother; James and John,
Philip and Bartholomew; 15Matthew and Thomas, James,
the son of Alphaeus, and Simon, called the Zealot; 16Jude,
the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, who later became
the betrayer.

The Healing of the Multitude on the Plain

17 Coming down with them again, He stood on a level
plain where a group of His disciples and a great crowd of
people had gathered, having come from all over Judea and
Jerusalem, and even from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon.
They came to hear Him and to be cured of their ailments.
18Also those who were vexed by foul spirits were healed.
19Everyone in the crowd tried to touch Him, because power
went from Him and healed them all.

The Sermon on the Plain

20 Then He looked directly at His disciples, and spoke:
"Blessed are you who are poor, for the kingdom of God
is yours. 21Blessed are you who go hungry now, for you will
be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.
22Blessed are you when men hate you, reproach you, and
reject your name as wicked because of the Son of Man.
23When that day comes, rejoice and leap for joy, for surely
your reward will be great in heaven. Were not the prophets
treated that same way by their fathers?

24 "But woe upon you who are rich, for you are enjoying
your comforts now! 25Woe upon you who have plenty to eat
now, for you will go hungry. Woe upon you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep! 26Woe upon you when every-
one speaks well of you! Were not the false prophets spoken
well of by their fathers?

The Law of Love

27 "To you who listen to Me I say, Love your enemies;
do good to those who hate you. 28Bless those who curse
you; pray for those who mistreat you. 29To him who hits you
on the cheek, offer him the other, too; and to him who takes
your overcoat, do not deny him your coat also. 30Give to
everyone who asks of you. If someone takes what belongs
to you, do not ask for its return. 31Do to others as you
would have them do to you.

32 "If you love only those who love you, what merit is
there in that? Even sinners love those who love them. 33And
if you do good to them who do good to you, what credit is
that to you? Even sinners do as much. 34Again, if you lend
to those from whom you expect to get repayment, what
thanks do you earn? Even sinners lend to one another, ex-
pecting to be paid back in full. 35Rather, love your enemies
and help them; lend, but never hope for anything in return.
Then your reward will be great and you will be called the
sons of the Most High, for He is good to the ungrateful and
the wicked.

Judging and Giving

36 "Your Father is also merciful; be as merciful as He is.
37Judge no one, and no one will judge you. Condemn no one,
and no one will condemn you. Forgive, and you will be for-
given. 38Give, and it will be given to you; good measure
(pressed down, shaken together, running over) will be
poured into your bag. For with the same measure that you
give it will be measured out to you again."

The Speck and the Splinter

39 He told them a saying: "Can one blind man lead an-
other? Will they not both fall into some ditch?" 40Also an-
other proverb: "A pupil is not above his teacher. He will be
like his teacher if he is well trained."

41 "Why do you keep looking at the speck of dust in

your brother's eye, but fail to notice the piece of wood in your own eye? 42Or, how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove that speck from your eye,' when you do not see the big splinter in your own eye? You hypocrite! Remove the splinter from your own eye first; then you will see clearly how to remove the dust speck from your brother's eye.

The Tree and the Fruit

43 "No good tree produces bad fruit, and no poor tree produces good fruit. 44Every tree is known by its fruit. So, men do not gather figs from thorns, or grapes from bramble bushes. 45A good man does good because of the good things stored in his heart, but a wicked man does evil because of the evil things stored in his heart. It is from what the heart is full of, that the mouth speaks.

The House on the Rock

46 "And why do you call Me 'Lord! Lord!' but do not do what I say? 47If anyone comes to Me, listens to My words and obeys them, I will tell you whom he is like. 48He is like a man who built a house and dug deep to lay the foundation on rock. There came a flood and the river burst against the house, yet did not shake it, for it had been built so wisely. 49But the one who listens to Me but does not obey is like the man who built a house on the ground, without any other foundation. When the flood stream dashed against that house, it collapsed at once and its ruin was complete."

CHAPTER 7

The Healing of the Centurion's Servant

WHEN He had ended this message, heard also by the people, He went back to Capernaum. 2There was a captain there who had a very dear servant who was ill almost to the point of death. 3He heard about Jesus and so sent some Jewish elders to Him, to beg Him to come over and

heal his servant. [4]They came to Jesus and pleaded with Him earnestly to come, saying that the man was worthy to have this favor shown him. [5]"He loves our nation," they said, "and he has built our synagogue for us."

6 Accordingly, Jesus set out with them. But He had not gone very far from the house when he was met by some of the captain's friends. This was their message from the captain: "Lord, do not go to any trouble, for I am not worthy that You should come in under my roof. [7]Nor am I worthy to come to You. So, just say the word, and my servant will be made well. [8]For I, too, am a man who has to obey orders, and as I have soldiers under me I give orders, saying to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to that one, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my servant I say, 'Do this!' and he does it."

9 When Jesus heard this He was amazed and, turning to the crowd that was following Him, said, "I tell you that not even in Israel have I found such faith!" [10]The messengers then went back to the captain's house, and there they found the servant well again.

The Raising of the Widow's Son

11 The next day He was going to a town called Nain. Many of His disciples followed along, as well as a great crowd. [12]But, as they approached the gate of the town, a dead man was being carried out, a widow's only son, and there were many people with her. [13]The Lord had compassion on her when He saw her and said to her, "Do not weep." [14]He then came up and touched the bier, at which the pallbearers stopped. Then He said, "Young man, I say to you, Arise!" [15]And the dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus presented him to his mother. [16]Reverent fear then came upon them all, and they praised God, saying, "A great prophet has risen up among us! God has visited His people!" [17]And the news of this event went out into all Judea and the surrounding country.

John's Question and Jesus' Answer

18 John's disciples told him all these things. [19]So John called two of his disciples and sent them to Jesus to ask, "Are You the Coming One, or must we keep on looking for Another?" [20]And that is what the men said when they came to Him. They said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You to ask, 'Are You the Coming One, or must we keep on looking for Another?' "

21 At that moment He was healing many people of diseases and plagues and foul spirits, and He gave sight to the blind. [22]But He answered them, "Go back to John and tell him what you have seen and heard, that the blind are made to see, the lame to walk, lepers are made clean, and the deaf are made to hear, the dead are raised to life, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. [23]And blessed is the man who finds nothing in Me to offend him."

Jesus' Testimony to John the Baptist

24 When John's messengers had gone away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John. "When you folk went out into the wilderness, what did you expect to see? A patch of reeds swaying in the wind? [25]No? Then, what did you go out to see? A man splendidly dressed? Hardly! Those who are handsomely clothed and live in luxury are to be found in the palaces of kings. [26]Then, what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, indeed! Yes, and something more than a prophet. [27]This is the man of whom it is written, 'See, I send My messenger before Your face, the one who shall prepare Your way ahead of You' (*Malachi* 3:1).

28 "And I say to you, Among all the sons of women there is none greater than John the Baptist. And yet, the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

29 When the people heard Him, they all, including the tax-collectors, gave glory to God for His justice, for they had accepted the baptism of John.

Jesus' Rebuke to the Age

30 Not so the Pharisees and teachers of the law. By not having been baptized by John, they had spurned God's plans for them, to their own loss.

31 The Lord then said, "To what shall I compare the men of this age? What are they like? 32They are like little children playing in a market place and calling out to one another, 'When we piped for you, you would not dance, and when we wailed for you, you would not weep.' 33So when John the Baptist came he did not eat bread or drink wine, but you said, 'He has a devil!' 34And now the Son of Man has come, and He both eats and drinks. But you say, 'Look! a glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax-collectors and sinners!' 35Still, wisdom is vindicated by her children."

Jesus Anointed in Simon's Home

36 One of the Pharisees invited Him to dinner, so Jesus went to the Pharisee's house and took a seat at the table. 37Now there was a woman in the town, a social outcast, who found out that He was at the Pharisee's house, and she came to the place, bringing along an alabaster flask of perfumed oil. 38She stood behind Him, at His feet, and wept. Then she started to bathe His feet with her tears, and to wipe them with the hair of her head. She kissed His feet repeatedly, and anointed them with oil.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he thought within himself, "If this Man were really a prophet, He would know who this woman is that is touching Him, and what she is, for she is a prostitute." 40Jesus answered him by saying, "I have something to say to you, Simon." And he said, "Teacher, say it."

The Parable of the Two Debtors

41 "There was a money-lender," He said, "and he had two debtors. The one owed him a hundred dollars, the

other owed ten dollars. [42]Neither of them had anything to pay with, but he forgave them both. Now, tell me, which of them should love him the most?"

43 "I take it," answered Simon, "that it would be the one to whom he forgave the most." "Yes," He answered, "you have judged correctly." [44]Then, turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came here to your home, but you did not give Me water for My feet, but she has washed them with her tears and dried them with her hair. [45]You gave Me no kiss, but she has, from the time I came in, affectionately kissed My feet again and again. [46]You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with perfumed oil. [47]Therefore, I say to you, because she has loved Me much, her sins, though many, are forgiven. But the one who has little to be forgiven loves Me but little."

48 Then He spoke to the woman. "Your sins are forgiven," He said. [49]Then those at the table with Him began to say within themselves, "Who can this be, who even forgives sins?" [50]But He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

CHAPTER 8

Jesus' Ministry in Galilee

AFTER this, He took another journey through towns and villages, one after the other, preaching and telling the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. The twelve apostles were with Him. [2]There were also certain women who had been freed from wicked spirits and infirmities; Mary, called the Magdalene, who had had seven devils driven out of her, was one of them. [3]Joanna, wife of Chusa, one of Herod's servants, was another. There were also Susanna and many others who had helped along, giving of the means they had.

The Parable of the Sower

4 A great crowd was gathering and people were still coming to Him out of every town. He then spoke to them in parables.

5 "A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he was sowing, some of the seeds fell along the path, and they were trampled on until the birds came and ate them up. 6And some fell among the rocks, and they sprang up fast, but dried out because they lacked moisture. 7And some fell among thorns and grew up with them, but were smothered. 8And some fell into good soil, and sprang up and yielded a hundred-fold." When He had finished the parable He called out, "Hear this, you who have ears to hear!"

9 His disciples then asked Him what the parable meant. 10He said, "To you it has been granted to understand the mysteries of God's kingdom, but to the others it has to come by parables. There are those who look and yet do not see, who hear and yet do not understand. 11Now, the parable means this: The seed is the Word of God. 12The ones along the path are those who hear the Word, but the devil comes along and takes its message away from their hearts, lest they might believe and be saved. 13Those among the rocks are such as hear the Word and accept it joyfully, but since it has no rootage they believe for a little while only, and then in the hour of trial they fall away. 14And those that fell among thorns are such as hear the Word but as time goes on they are overcome by the pressing cares of life, and its riches and pleasures, and they never reach perfection. 15But that which fell in rich soil refers to those who hear the Word and keep it, in good and honest hearts, and it yields fruit to those who hold out.

The Parable of the Lighted Candle

16 "No one lights a candle to cover it up with a dish, or to put it under a bed. No, he puts it on a candlestick so that those who come in may see the light. 17There is really

nothing hidden that shall not be disclosed, nor is there any secret that shall not be known and come to light. [18]Be careful, then, how you hear; for whoever has shall be given more, and whoever has nothing, from him shall be taken even what little he seems to have."

The New Relationships

19 His mother and his brothers came to visit Him but they could not get near Him because of the crowd. [20]"Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, waiting to see You," someone told Him. [21]In reply He said, "My mother and My brothers are those who hear God's Word, and keep it."

Jesus Stills the Storm

22 One day He and His disciples embarked in a boat to go over to the other side of the lake. So they began the voyage. [23]But as they were sailing along He fell asleep. Then a windstorm broke loose over the lake and they were in danger, for the boat was being filled with water. [24]They went to Him and awoke Him, crying, "Master! Master! We are going to sink!" So He got up and rebuked the wind and the angry waves. The storm ceased and there was calm. [25]"Where is your faith?" He asked them. But they were full of fear and wonderment and said to one another, "Just who is this, that even the wind and waves obey Him when He gives a command?"

Healing of the Maniac of Gadara

26 They sailed on to the land of the Gadarenes, which lies opposite Galilee. [27]As He set foot on land, there met Him a man out of the city who had for a long time been demon-possessed. He wore no clothes, and did not live in a house, but in the tombs. [28]When he saw Jesus, he gave an outcry and fell down before Him and cried out with a loud voice, "What do You want of me, O Jesus, Son of God, the Most High? I pray You not to torment me!" [29]For He was just

then giving orders to the unclean spirit to come out of the man. The demon had seized him many times, and then they would bind him with chains and fetters and keep watch over him, but he would break his bonds and then the demon would drive him into the desert.

30 "What is your name?" asked Jesus of him. He said, "Legion," because many demons had taken possession of him, 31and they entreated Him that He would not command them to go back to the bottomless pit. 32There was a great herd of pigs feeding on the mountainside, and they begged Him for permission to enter them instead, and He gave them leave. 33The demons then left the man and entered the animals, whereupon the herd rushed madly down the steep slope into the lake and were drowned.

34 The herdsmen fled when they saw what had taken place, and they reported the matter both in the city and the country. 35And people came out to see for themselves what had happened. When they came to Jesus, they found the one-time demoniac seated at His feet, clothed and of sound mind. It made them afraid. 36Those who had seen it told them how the demoniac had been healed. 37But all the people of the country of the Gadarenes asked Him to leave them, for they were greatly terrified.

38 The man from whom the devils had been driven out, however, begged to leave to go with Jesus, but He sent him away. 39"Go back home," He said, "and tell everything that God has done for you." So he went back and spread all over the town the news of what Jesus had done for him.

The Request of Jairus

40 A crowd was there to welcome Jesus when He returned. They had all been awaiting Him. 41One of them was a man named Jairus, the ruler of a synagogue. He came to Jesus, fell down at His feet, and begged Him to come to his home 42because his only daughter, about twelve years of age, was at the point of death.

Healing of the Woman with the Hemorrhage

43 In the crowd was a woman who had had a hemorrhage
for twelve years, and she had spent all her income on doctors
but had found no one who could heal her. 44She came up
behind Him and touched the edge of His robe, and the flow
of blood stopped at once. 45"Who touched Me?" asked
Jesus. Everyone denied having done so. Then Peter and
those with him said, "Master, You see how the people are
streaming in and crowding You. And yet You ask, 'Who
touched Me?' " 46"Someone touched Me," said Jesus, "for
I could tell that power went out from Me." 47When the
woman saw that she could not keep it secret, she came for-
ward, trembling with fear, fell at His feet and told Him why
she had touched Him, and how she had been healed at once.
48"Daughter," He said to her, "be of good courage. Your
faith has healed you. Depart in peace."

The Raising of Jairus' Daughter

49 While He was yet speaking, a messenger from the
home of the synagogue ruler came and said to him, "Your
daughter is dead. Do not trouble the Teacher." 50When
Jesus heard it He said to him, "Have no fear. Only believe
and she will be restored to life."

51 When they came to the house He would not let anyone
go in with Him except Peter, James and John, and the child's
father and mother. 52And everybody was shedding tears and
lamenting her, so He said to them, "Do not weep. She is
not dead, but is sleeping." 53They laughed at Him, for they
were sure that she was really dead. 54And He put them all
out, after which He took her by the hand, and said, "Arise,
My child!" 55And her spirit returned and she rose up at once.
He then gave orders that they should give her something to
eat. 56And He counseled her parents, amazed as they were,
not to tell a soul what had happened.

CHAPTER 9

The Disciples Sent Out

HE called the twelve disciples to Him and gave them power and authority over all the demons, and power to cure diseases. 2Then He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

3 "Take nothing with you to use on your journey," He said to them. "No staff, no provision bag, no bread, no money. Let no one take an extra coat. 4Whatever house you go to stay in, stay there until you leave town. 5Wherever they do not welcome you, leave that town and shake off the very dust from your feet, in protest against them."

6 So they set out, going from village to village, preaching the Gospel and healing the sick wherever they went.

7 King Herod heard of all His doings and was perplexed, for some said that John had risen from the dead. 8And some said that Elijah had appeared, while others thought that one of the old prophets had returned to life. 9But Herod said, "I beheaded John, but who is this man about whom I hear such reports?" He was anxious to see Him.

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

10 When the apostles returned they told Him what they had done. Then He took them with Him to a secluded spot near the town of Bethsaida. 11The people learned of it and followed Him. So He welcomed them and told them about the kingdom of God, and healed those who were sick.

12 Towards evening the Twelve came up to Him and said, "Send the people away, so that they can go to the surrounding villages and farm houses to find lodging and provisions, for we are in the desert here. 13But He said to them, "Give them something to eat." They answered, "Why, we have only five loaves and two fishes, unless we ourselves should go and buy food for all these people." 14They numbered about five thousand men.

Nevertheless, He said to His disciples, "Have them seated in groups of fifty each." [15]And they did as He had said, making all of them sit down on the ground. [16]Then He took the five loaves and two fishes and, looking up to heaven, He blessed them and broke them into pieces, then gave them to His disciples to set before the people. [17]And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets of fragments left over.

Peter's Confession of Christ

18 Once when He had turned aside to pray, His disciples being with Him, He put this question to them, "Who do the people say I am?" [19]"John the Baptist," they answered, "though some say Elijah, and others think that You are one of the old prophets risen from the dead." [20]"But you," He asked, "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ of God!"

21 He then gave them strict orders, forbidding them to tell this to anyone. [22]Then He added, "The Son of Man must endure many sufferings. He will be rejected by the elders, chief priests and scribes, and He will be killed. But on the third day He will rise again."

The Cost of Discipleship

23 Then, to all alike, He said, "If anyone wants to follow Me, he must first deny himself and take up his cross day after day and follow Me. [24]Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. [25]What benefit does a man have if he gains the whole world but is himself destroyed or lost? [26]If anyone is ashamed of Me and My teaching, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He shall come in His glory, and that of the Father and the holy angels. [27]Truly I say that there are some standing here who will not die before they have seen the kingdom of God."

The Transfiguration

28 About eight days after these talks He took Peter, John
and James with Him, and went up on a mountain to pray.
29Then, as He was praying, His face took on a great change
and His clothing became dazzling white. 30And, behold! two
men — Moses and Elijah — were talking to Him, 31appear-
ing in glory as they talked about His death which He was
about to suffer at Jerusalem.

32 Meanwhile, Peter and his companions had been over-
come by sleep, but they awoke and saw Him in His glory
with the two men who stood in His presence. 33As they left
Jesus, Peter said to Him. "How good it is for us to be
here! Let us make three shrines, one for You, and one for
Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not realize what he was
saying. 34And while he was speaking a cloud overshadowed
them and they were frightened when the others disappeared
in the cloud.

35 Then a Voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is
My Beloved Son. Hear Him!" 36When the Voice had spoken,
they found Jesus alone. They kept silent and told no one at
that time what they had seen.

The Healing of the Epileptic Child

37 The next day they came down from the mountain and
were met by a great crowd. 38In that crowd there was a man
who called out, "Teacher, I beg You to take a look at my
son; he is my only child. 39Look! At times an evil spirit takes
hold of him, so that suddenly he gives a scream, is shaken
by convulsions and foams at the mouth. It passes from him
only after a struggle, leaving him with bruises. 40I have asked
Your disciples if they would drive the demon out, but they
could not."

41 Jesus answered, "O this unbelieving and perverted
generation! How long must I be with you and bear with you?
Bring your son here." 42But, even as he was on his way, the

demon threw the boy into convulsions. Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and gave the boy, healed, back to his father.

43 They were all astounded at the majesty of God. Then, while everyone was still wondering at what Jesus had done, He talked to His disciples. 44"Mark these words, and remember them," He said. "The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." 45However, they did not understand what He meant. The meaning was hidden from them and they could not see through it. Besides, they were afraid to ask Him about the matter.

Jesus' Teaching on Humility

46 A controversy arose among them as to which one of them might be the greatest. 47Since Jesus knew how they were reasoning about this in their hearts, He took a little child and set it beside Him. 48Then He said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives also Him who sent Me. Who is greatest? He who is least among you all."

49 John, answering this, said, "Master, we saw a man casting out devils in Your name, and we told him to stop it because he was not one of us." 50"No," Jesus said to him, "do not forbid him, for whoever is not against us is for us."

Jesus and the Disciples Leave Galilee

51 The time was drawing near when He was to be taken up to heaven again, so He made up His mind firmly to go to Jerusalem. 52He sent messengers ahead of Him. These started out and came to a village in Samaria to make ready for Him. 53But the people there would not welcome Him, because He was going on to Jerusalem. 54When His disciples James and John noticed this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to call down fire from heaven to consume them? That is what Elijah did." 55He turned and spoke disapprovingly to them, "You do not know of what spirit you are. 56The Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save." And they went on to another village.

The Need of Self-Renunciation

57 As they were going along the road a man said to Him,
"I will go with You wherever You go." 58Jesus answered
him, "Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but
the Son of Man has no place where He may lay His head."
59He said to another man, "Follow Me!" but he said, "Lord,
let me first go and bury my father." 60Jesus said to him,
"Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach
the kingdom of God." 61There was still another who said,
"I will follow You, Lord, but first let me say goodbye to
the folks at home." 62And Jesus answered him, "Nobody
who puts his hand to the plow but keeps on looking back
is fit for the kingdom of God."

CHAPTER 10

The Seventy Sent Out

AFTER these events the Lord chose also seventy
others and sent them before Him, two by two, to every town
and place to which He also expected to go. 2He therefore
said to them, "The harvest is truly plentiful but the work-
men are few. Therefore, call on the Lord of the harvest to
send more workers into His fields. 3Now go, but listen; I am
really sending you out like lambs among wolves! 4Do not
take along any purse, or bag, or shoes, and do not greet
anyone along the way. 5The first thing you must say when
you come to a house is, 'Peace be to this house!' 6If a man
of peace lives in that house your peace will rest upon him,
but if not, it will come back to you. 7Stay on in that same
house. Eat and drink what they have, for a laborer is worthy
of his pay. Do not keep moving about from house to house.

8 "If you go to any town and they welcome you, eat what
they set before you, 9and heal the sick that may be there,
and tell them, "The kingdom of God is at hand. 10But if

you come to a town where they do not give you welcome, then go out into its streets and say, 11"Even the dust of your town, which clings to our feet, we wipe off in protest. But even you should know that the kingdom of God is near.' 12I tell you that on the day of reckoning it will go easier for Sodom than for that town.

13 "Woe upon you, Chorazin! Woe upon you, Bethsaida! For if such miracles had been done in Tyre and Sidon as have been done in you, they would long ago have repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes. 14Indeed, in the day of judgment Tyre and Sidon will fare better than you! 15And you, Capernaum, you have been praised as high as heaven, yet you shall be debased as low as hell!

The Return of the Seventy

16 "Whoever hears you hears Me. And whoever rejects you also rejects Me. And whoever rejects Me rejects Him who sent me!"

17 The Seventy returned with joy. "O Lord," they said, "even the devils are subject to us in Your name." 18He said to them, "I watched Satan falling like lightning from heaven. 19Now listen! I have given you authority to trample on serpents and scorpions and all the might of the satanic foe, and nothing will harm you in any way. 20Still, you should not rejoice so much over the fact that the devils submit to you, as that your names are recorded in heaven."

Jesus Rejoices in the Holy Spirit

21 In that very hour He also rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I thank You because You have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and made them clear to the very young. Yes, Father, this was all according to Your good pleasure."

22 And He said, "Everything has been entrusted to Me by My Father. No one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him."

23 Then, when they were alone, He turned to His disciples and said, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see!
24Surely, many of the prophets and kings would have wished to see the things that you are seeing, but did not see them, and to hear what you are hearing, but never heard it."

Jesus Answers a Lawyer

25 Once a lawyer rose to test Him. "Teacher," he said, "what must I do to inherit everlasting life?" 26In turn, He asked him, "What does the Law say? How do you interpret it?" 27He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself."
28"You have answered correctly," He said to him, "and if you will do this, you will live." 29But he, trying to justify himself for asking, said to Jesus, "But who is my neighbor?"

The Parable of the Good Samaritan

30 Jesus took up the challenge and said, "There was once a man who, on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho, fell among robbers who stripped him and beat him, leaving him half-dead. 31A priest happened to be going down that road, and he saw him, but passed by on the other side.
32Similarly, a Levite came along. When he came to that spot and saw him, he also passed by on the opposite side.
33Finally, a Samaritan, going on a trip, came by, and when he saw him he was moved with pity. 34He went up to him, bound up his wounds and poured oil and wine on them. Then he placed him on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. 35The next morning, on leaving, he gave the innkeeper some money and said, 'Take care of him, and if this is not enough to cover all his expenses, I will pay you the balance when I come back this way.'

36 "In your opinion, which of these three showed himself a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?"
37He answered, "The one who took pity on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

Mary and Martha Contrasted

38 As they continued on their way they came to a certain village where a woman by the name of Martha welcomed Him to her house. 39She had a sister named Mary who, having seated herself at the feet of the Lord, listened to what He was telling. 40But Martha was concerned about all she had to do. So she came to Him and said, "Don't You care at all that my sister has left me to do the work of serving all alone? Please tell her to come and help me." 41"Martha, Martha," Jesus said to her, "you are worried and troubled about many things. 42But, really, our wants are few. In fact, only one thing is necessary, and Mary has chosen that good thing, and it shall not be taken from her."

CHAPTER 11

The Model Prayer

ON one occasion, after He had been praying, one of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples."

2 So He said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Father, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. 3Give us today our daily bread, 4and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those indebted to us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom, and power, and glory, for ever. Amen!' "

Parable of the Persistent Friend

5 He said to them, "Suppose you have a friend to whom you go at midnight, and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread. 6You see, a friend of mine who is on a trip has dropped in on me, and I do not have a thing to set before him.' 7Then suppose the man replies, 'Oh, don't bother me! The door is already locked, my children and I are in bed, and I just can't get up to give you anything!' 8Still, I am sure

of this, that even if the man would not get up and give you the bread because he is your friend, yet he would get up and give you as much as you wanted because of your persistence. 9Therefore I say to you, 'Ask! — and it will be opened up to you. 10For everyone who keeps asking will receive; and everyone who keeps knocking will have the door opened to him.'

The Three-Fold Promise

11 "Would anyone of you who is a father give your son a stone if he asked for bread? Or a serpent if he asked for a fish? 12Or a scorpion if he asked for an egg? 13Well then, if you who are sinful know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him."

Jesus Charged With Satanic Alliance

14 He was driving out a demon, one that was dumb, and when the demon was expelled the man could speak. This made the people wonder. 15Some of them, however, remarked, "Oh, he casts out devils by the help Beelzebub, the prince of devils." 16There were others who demanded of Him a sign from heaven, as a test.

17 He was aware of their thoughts and said to them, "Every kingdom that is not united faces destruction, and one house falls against another when divided. 18This is true of Satan, too, and if he is at war with himself how can his kingdom stand? And yet you say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub! 19But, if I cast out devils by the help of Beelzebub, by whose help do your sons cast them out? Let them be your judges! 20But if I, by the help of God, cast out devils, then the kingdom of God has come down to you.

21 "When a strong man is armed and keeps watch over his dwelling, then his property is safe. 22But when a stronger man attacks him and overcomes him, then he takes away the weapons on which he depended and makes away with

his goods. [23]Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather in partnership with Me, scatters.

Moral Reformation Useless

24 "When an unclean spirit leaves a man, it may wander about in search of a place to stay. If it finds none, it says, 'I will go back to my house that I left.' [25]When it comes back it finds that it is still unoccupied, but cleaned out and swept. [26]Then it goes and brings back seven other demons more wicked than itself, and they come in and dwell there. So the final condition of that man is far worse than the first."

The Blessing of Obedience

27 As He was saying these things, a woman in the crowd raised her voice and said to him, "Blessed is the mother who bore You and nursed You!" [28]"True," He answered, "but more blessed are those who hear God's Word, and keep it!"

The Sign of Jonah

29 Then, as the people were pressing in on Him, He started to speak: "This is a wicked age. It is looking for a sign, but no other sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah, the prophet. [30]For as Jonah was a sign given to the men of Nineveh, so shall the Son of Man be a sign to the men of today. [31]The Queen of the South will rise up at the judgment together with the men of this generation, and will condemn them. For she came from the ends of the earth to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, but now One greater than Solomon is here! [32]At the judgment there will be the men of Nineveh rising up together with this generation, and they will condemn it, because they repented when Jonah preached to them, whereas now One greater than Jonah is here.

The Parable of the Lighted Candle

33 "No one lights a lamp, then hides it in a cellar or under a basket. No, he puts it on the table, so that all who come in may see by its light. [34]The eye is the lamp of the

body. If your eye is good, then your whole body will be in light, but when the eye is bad, your whole being is in darkness. [35]See to it, therefore, that the light in you is not darkness. [36]So, if your whole body is lighted up, with no part of it in darkness, then it will be lighted up as when a lamp illuminates you with its bright rays."

Jesus Denounces the Pharisees

37 When He had spoken, a Pharisee invited Him to dine with him. He went to his house and sat down at the table. [38]The Pharisee watched Him, observing that He did not first wash before the meal, and they wondered about it. [39]But the Lord said to him, "Now you Pharisees keep the outside of cups and plates clean, but within yourselves you are full of greed and wickedness. [40]You fools! Did not the Creator of the outside also make the inside as well? [41]Rather, let your giving of alms be from within; then all things will at once seem clean to you.

42 "But woe to you, Pharisees! for you pay tithes of mint, and rue, and every herb, but you give no thought to justice and the love of God. It was your duty to do these things, without neglecting the minor obligations.

43 "Woe to you, Pharisees! for you love the front seats in the synagogues, and the greetings of respect in the marketplaces. [44]Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites! for you are like hidden graves which men may trample on without knowing it."

Jesus Denounces the Lawyers

45 Now one of the lawyers said to Him in protest, "Teacher, when You talk this way you are really insulting us, too." [46]"Yes," He said, "for these woes apply to you lawyers also, for you load men with burdens too heavy to be borne, and yet you yourselves will not touch one of these burdens with one finger. [47]Woe to you! for you erect monuments in honor of the prophets — men whom your fathers

murdered. [48]In this way you bear witness to the wicked deeds of your fathers and give your approval, since you build monuments for the men your fathers killed.

49 "That is why the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.' [50]And so this generation may have to answer for the blood of all the prophets shed since the foundation of the world. [51]That is, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who was killed between the altar and the temple. Yes, all this will be charged up against this generation.

52 "Woe, then, to you, doctors of the law, because you have taken away the key to the door of knowledge! You did not go in there yourselves, and you have prevented others from going in when they would." [53]After He had left the place the scribes and Pharisees determined to pursue Him relentlessly, by provoking Him to speak His mind on many questions. [54]They lay in wait for Him, trying to catch Him in something He might say that would give them a chance to bring charges against Him.

CHAPTER 12

Jesus Gives Warnings to the Disciples

CROWDS numbering thousands gathered about Him and trod one another down. But He paid attention first of all to His disciples, saying, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees! That leaven is hypocrisy. [2]Nothing is covered up which will not be uncovered, nor secret which will not be known. [3]So, if you have said anything in the dark it will be heard in the light, and if you have whispered something in some secret chamber, that, too, will be shouted from the housetops.

4 "My friends, let Me say to you, don't fear those who can kill the body but cannot do more than that. [5]I will tell you whom to fear: Fear Him who has not only the power

to kill but also to cast into hell. Yes, indeed, Him you must fear.

6 "Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet God keeps every one of them in His mind. 7And as for you, even the hairs of your head are numbered. Don't be afraid, you are surely worth more than a flock of sparrows.

8 "And this I want you to know, that everyone who openly acknowledges Me before men, the Son of God will openly acknowledge before God's angels. 9But whoever disowns Me before men will be disowned before God's angels. 10If any one speaks a word against the Son of Man, he may be forgiven; but if he blasphemes against the Holy Spirit, the sin will not be forgiven. 11In case they should bring you before the synagogues, and the rulers, and other authorities, don't be anxious as to how or what you should answer. 12When that time comes the Holy Spirit will teach you what you ought to say."

13 One of the men in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." 14But He refused, saying, "Man, who appointed Me judge or arbitrator in your case?" 15Then, speaking to them all, He said, "See to it that you guard yourselves against greed, for a man's life is not made up of the number of things he owns."

The Parable of the Rich Fool

16 He now told them a parable. "There was once a rich man," He said, "whose fields yielded abundant crops. 17And he said to himself, 'What shall I do, for I do not have room enough to store my crops?' 18Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will take down my granaries and build larger ones, large enough to store all my crops and all my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, "O soul, you have plenty of good things now, and for many years to come. Therefore, take it easy. Eat, drink, and have a good time." ' 20But God said to him, 'You foolish man! This very night your soul will be

required of you. Then who will have the things that you have laid up?' [21]So it goes with a man who hoards up riches for himself, but is not rich in God's sight."

Jesus' Teaching Concerning Trust in God

22 He went on to say to His disciples, "You should not worry, therefore, about your life, being anxious about what you should eat, or fretting about what you should wear. [23]Life is of greater importance than food, and the body more so than clothes. [24]Just look at the ravens. They neither sow nor reap. They have no barns or granaries, yet God feeds them. Are you not of much greater value than the birds?

25 "And, again, can any one of you, by worrying about it, add a foot or more to his height? [26]If you are, then, powerless to do even the smallest things, why are you concerned about the rest? [27]See how the lilies grow! They do not toil and spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was dressed like one of these. [28]But if God gives such splendor to the grasses of the field, which live today and tomorrow are used for fuel, how much rather would He give you clothing, O you of little faith? [29]Therefore, stop your concern over food and drink, and your constant anxiety about them. [30]For that is just what all the nations in the world are concerned about. Remember, your heavenly Father knows that you need these things. [31]So what you should do is to seek His kingdom; then all these things will be given to you besides.

Concerning Proper Alms-Giving

32 "O little flock, don't be afraid, for your Father takes delight in giving you the kingdom. [33]Sell what you have and give to the poor. Thus you will make for yourselves purses that do not grow old, and you will have inexhaustible riches laid up in heaven, where thieves do not come and moths do not destroy. [34]And your heart will be where your treasure is.

Warnings Concerning Christ's Return

35 "Be ready — all dressed up and with the lights all on.
36Be like men who await their master's return from some
wedding feast, ready to open up to him as soon as he comes
and knocks at the door. 37Happy will be those servants whom
the master finds watching when He comes! Surely he will
put on his ordinary clothes, get them seated at the table and
wait on them himself. 38If he finds them watching, whether
he comes before midnight or after, those servants will be
happy. 39Be sure of this, too; that if a master could know
at what hour a thief were coming, he would be on the watch
and not let his house be broken into. 40You, too, must
therefore be ready, for the Son of Man will come at a time
when you do not expect Him."

Parable of the Steward

41 Peter asked Him, "Are You telling this parable for
our benefit, or is it also meant for everyone? 42The Lord
said in reply, "Who, then, is a faithful and wise steward?
Is it not one whom an owner puts in charge of his household,
and who pays out at stated times the pay agreed on? 43Will
not that servant be happy when his master comes back and
finds him doing just that? 44Of a truth I tell you, that he will
surely entrust to him all his possessions.

45 "But now, if that manager should say in his heart,
'The master delays his return,' and then should begin to
abuse both his male and female help, and should start feast-
ing and getting drunk . . .? 46Then if some day when he is
not expected, at a moment unforeseen, the master shows up,
he will surely discharge the steward at once and give him
the penalty of the unfaithful.

47 "Again, if that steward knew his master's desires but
did not make ready for him or do what he wanted done, then
he will be flogged with many blows of the lash. 48But if he
in ignorance did wrong worthy of punishment, he will get
fewer stripes. For of everyone to whom much has been

given, much will be expected. And of those who have been entrusted with much, people will demand even more.

The Christian Faith a Divider of Men

49 "I came to set the earth afire, and how I wish that it were kindled already! 50I have a baptism that I must go through with, and how I suffer until that has been completed! 51Do you think that I came to bring peace on earth? No, I say, rather division! 52From now on, in a house of five they will be divided three against two, and two against three. 53A father will be set against his son, a son against his father; a mother against her daughter, and the daughter against her mother; a mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

54 While addressing the crowd, He said, "When you see a cloud forming in the west, you at once say, 'That means rain.' And you are right. 55And when a south wind begins to blow, then you say, 'It is going to be a hot day.' And again you are right. 56You surely know how to read the signs of the earth and sky. And yet, you hypocrites! you cannot read the signs of the times; how is that? 57And why can't each one of you be a judge of what is right? 58This is what you should do: if you go to court with your opponent, on the way there try hard to come to an agreement with him, lest he turn you over to the judge, and the judge to an officer, and the officer put you in prison. 59And there, I am sure, you would have to stay until you had paid the last penny."

CHAPTER 13

The Importance of Repentance

AT THAT time some people came to Him and told Him about the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with that of their sacrifices. 2"Do you think," He asked them, "that these Galileans were greater sinners than

any other Galileans, just because this happened to them? 3No, not at all! And listen! Unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. 4And do you think that those eighteen men who were crushed and killed by fall of the Tower of Siloam were the most wicked men living in Jerusalem? 5No, they were not. And you will all perish as they had to perish, if you do not repent."

The Parable of the Barren Fig Tree

6 He made use of a parable. "There was a man who had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he kept coming and looking for fruit on it, but never found any. 7So he said to the gardener, 'Look here! For three years I have been looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why should it even take up the ground it stands on?' 8To this the gardener said, 'O sir, let it alone this one more year. I shall dig around it and fertilize it. 9Perhaps then it will bear fruit; if not, you can have it cut down later.' "

Jesus Criticized for Healing on the Sabbath

10 On one of the sabbaths He was teaching in one of their synagogues. 11In the audience was a woman who for eighteen years had suffered because of an evil spirit. She was bent over and could not lift herself up straight. 12Jesus noticed her and spoke to her, saying, "Woman, you are now rid of your infirmity." 13Then He put His hand on her and she immediately stood up straight and gave praise to God.

14 But the synagogue ruler became angry because Jesus had healed on the sabbath, and he turned to the congregation and said, "There are six days in which to work. If you want to be healed, come on one of those days, and not on the sabbath."

15 "You hypocrites!" said the Lord in reply. "Do you not, every one of you, loose your ox and your donkey and lead them to water on the sabbath? 16But this woman, a

daughter of Abraham, who has been in the bondage of Satan — think of it! — for eighteen years, should not have the right to be released from her bonds because it is the sabbath?"

17 At these remarks, all those who had taken sides against Him were ashamed of themselves. In fact, the whole crowd rejoiced at all the wonderful things He was doing.

Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven

18 "What is the kingdom of God like?" He asked. "To what may I compare it? 19It is like a mustard seed which a man took and planted in his garden. It sprang up and became a tree and the birds of the air roosted in its branches." 20Again He asked, "To what shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21It is like yeast that a woman worked into three measures of flour so that the whole batch became leavened."

Teachings en route to Jerusalem

22 He continued teaching, going through towns and villages on His way to Jerusalem. 23Then someone asked Him, "Lord, will only a few be saved?" And He said to them, 24"The door is narrow. Strive hard to go through it. I can tell you that many will try to enter it but will not be able to make it. 25The time will come when the Master of the house will get up and shut the door, then you on the outside will begin to knock on the door again and again, begging, 'Lord, Lord, open for us.' And His answer will be, 'I do not know where you are from.' 26You will then begin to say, 'But we ate and drank with you when you taught in our streets.' 27And He will say once more, 'I told you that I do not know where you come from. Be gone, all you evildoers!'

28 "Yes, you will weep and gnash your teeth when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you yourselves will be on the outside. 29And those who will sit down to feast in the kingdom of God will come from the east and the west, from the north and the

south. [30]Take notice that some who are last will be first, and some who are first will be last."

31 Some Pharisees came to Him that same day to warn Him. They said, "Herod wants to kill you. Therefore, leave this place and go elsewhere." [32]He answered them, "Go and say to that fox, 'I am casting out demons and healing the sick. I shall do so today and tomorrow, and on the third day I shall be through.' [33]But I must be on my way today, tomorrow and the third day, for it must not be that a prophet should die outside Jerusalem."

Jesus' Anguish Over Jerusalem

34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those who are sent to you, how often I have wanted to gather your children as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, but you say no! [35]And see now! Your house is left to itself, desolate. And you will not see Me again till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!' "

CHAPTER 14

The Healing of the Man with Dropsy

ONCE Jesus went out to dine at the home of a leading Pharisee. It was on a sabbath, and they were watching Him closely. [2]A man afflicted with dropsy was placed in front of Him. [3]Jesus asked the doctors of the law and the Pharisees present, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath, or not?" [4]They kept silent. Jesus thereupon took hold of the man and healed him, then let him go. [5]This done, He asked them again, "If any of you should have a son or an ox fall into a well, would you not at once pull him out, even on a sabbath day?" [6]To this they could give no answer.

Jesus' Advice to Self-Seekers

7 Jesus had observed how the invited guests had tried to

get the chief places at the table, so He taught them in a parable. This is what He said to them:

8 "When you are invited to a wedding feast by someone, do not sit down in the place of honor. The host may have invited some more distinguished person for that place. 9If so, the host who invited you both may come and say to you, 'My friend, the first place is for him,' and then you, in shame, will have to take a lower place. 10So when you get an invitation, come and select the lowest place. Then the host may come and say to you, 'My friend, come up higher.' In that case, you will have distinction before your fellow guests. 11For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

12 To the host who had invited Him, Jesus said, "When you put on a dinner or supper, do not invite your friends, or your brothers, or your relatives, or your rich neighbors, for they surely will invite you in return, and thus you will be repaid. 13Rather, when you give a feast, ask the poor to come, and the crippled, the lame, and the blind. 14You will be blessed for it, for they cannot repay you, but you will be rewarded at the resurrection of the just."

15 When one of the guests at His table heard this he remarked, "Blessed is the man who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

The Parable of the Great Supper

16 He answered, "Once there was a man who gave a great supper. Many were invited to come to it. 17Toward supper time a servant was sent to the invited guests to remind them. 'Come,' he said, 'for everything is ready!' 18But they all, every one of them, began to make excuses. 'I have bought a field,' said the first one to him, 'and I must go out to see it. So I ask you to excuse me, please,' 19'I have bought five yoke of oxen,' said another man, 'and have to go try them out. I pray you, let me be excused.' 20And still another said, 'I have just gotten married, and therefore can't come.' "

21 "The servant went back to his master and told him all
this. This made the master angry and he said to his servant,
'Hurry, go out into the streets and lanes of the city and get
the poor and crippled, the lame and blind to come.' 22Return-
ing, the servant reported, 'Sir, what you ordered has now
been done, but there is still room.' 23Then the master said to
the servant, 'Now go out upon the highways and byways and
make them come, so that my house may be filled. 24For not
one of those who were originally invited shall taste my supper'."

The Way of the Cross

25 A great number of people followed Him. He turned
around and spoke to them. 26"If any man comes to Me," He
said, "and does not, in comparison, hate his father and
mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters, and
even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. 27And if he does
not carry his cross and follow Me, he cannot be My disciple.

Counting the Cost

28 "Consider now, if one of you should want to build a
tower, wouldn't you first sit down and count the cost to see
if you have enough money to complete the tower? 29Otherwise
you might lay the foundation and then discover that you could
not finish the task, and the spectators standing around will
make fun of you. 30They will say, 'This fellow began to build,
but he couldn't finish the job!'

31 "Or suppose a king plans on going to war against an-
other king. Doesn't he first sit down and consider if with
ten thousand men he can meet his opponent who has twenty
thousand? 32Then, if he cannot meet him, he will send an
envoy to the foe while he is still a long way off, to ask for
terms of peace. 33This applies to every one of you: If you
are not willing to give up all that you have, you cannot be
a disciple of Mine.

The Tasteless Salt

34 "Salt is a good thing, but if it becomes tasteless, with

what can you restore its strength? [35]It is then fit neither for the soil nor the scrap heap. People simply throw it away. He who has ears, listen!"

CHAPTER 15

The Parable of the Lost Sheep

THE tax collectors and sinners were all coming to hear Him. [2]It made the Pharisees and scribes complain, and they said, "This man entertains sinners and eats with them." [3]So He told them this parable:

"If anyone of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, wouldn't you leave the other ninety-nine in the wilderness by themselves and go after the one that is lost until you find it? [4]And when you find it, you carry it on your shoulders, and rejoice. [5]Then you would go back home and call your friends and neighbors together and say to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.' [6]Indeed, it is that way in heaven. [7]There is more joy up there over one sinner who repents than over the ninety-nine righteous ones who do not need repentance.

The Parable of the Lost Coin

8 "Or suppose some woman has ten silver coins and then loses one of them. Doesn't she light a lamp and sweep the floor and search carefully until she finds it? [9]And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found the lost coin.' [10]I can tell you it is that way also among God's angels. If one sinner repents, they rejoice."

The Parable of the Prodigal Son

11 Again He said, "There was a man who had two sons. [12]The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, let me have the share of the property that will be coming to me.' So he

divided the property between them. [13]Soon after that, the younger son, having gathered together everything that was his, set out for a distant country, and there he spent all he had in reckless living. [14]When he had squandered everything, a terrible famine came upon that country and he began to be in need. [15]So he went and hired out to one of the citizens of that land, who sent him into his barnyard to feed the pigs. [16]He was so hungry he longed to have some of the carob tree pods the pigs were eating, but no one gave him a thing.

17 "Finally, he came to his senses. He said, 'My father has many hired men and they have an abundance of food, and here I am starving to death! [18]I will get up and go to my father and say, "Father, I have sinned both against heaven and against you. [19]I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Oh, let me be like one of your servants!" '

20 "Then he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt very sorry for him. The father ran to him, put his arms around him and kissed him again and again. [21]'But, Father,' the son said to him, 'I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and I am not worthy now to be called your son.' [22]The father, however, gave orders to his servants: 'Go quickly and find the best suit of clothes and put it on him; give him a ring for his hand, and shoes for his feet. [23]And fetch the fattened calf and slaughter it. Then let us eat and be merry! [24]Why? Because this son of mine was dead and is living again! He was lost and has been found!' So they began to make merry.

25 "Meanwhile the older son was out in the field. And as he was coming home and neared the house, he could hear the sound of music and dancing. [26]So he called one of the servant boys and asked what was going on. [27]He was told, 'Your brother has come back and your father killed the fattened calf because he got him back safe and sound!' [28]But he was angry and would not go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him, [29]but he answered his father,

'Just think of the many years I have worked for you, and never once have I disobeyed you in anything, and yet you have never given me as much as a young goat so that I could have a feast with my friends. 30But when this son of yours came home, after squandering your property with loose women, then you go and kill the fattened calf for him!'

31 "The father said to him, 'My boy, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32At the same time, it is proper that we celebrate and rejoice now, for this brother of yours was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found!' "

CHAPTER 16

The Parable of the Dishonest Manager

THIS parable also He told to His disciples:

"There was a rich man who employed a manager, and it was reported to him that the manager was wasting his goods. 2So he called him in and said to him, 'What is this I hear about you? Give me an accounting of your stewardship, for you cannot be the manager of my property any longer.'

3 "The manager then said to himself, 'What shall I do, now that my employer is taking the management from me? I don't have the strength to dig ditches. I would be ashamed to go begging. 4Say! I know what I'll do! I'll fix it so that when I get discharged from this position people will still welcome me to their homes.'

5 "So he sent for his master's debtors, one by one. He asked the first one, 'How much do you owe my master?' 6'One hundred kegs of oil,' he answered. The manager said to him, 'Sit right down, take your bill, and change it to fifty.' 7And he asked the next one, 'How much do you owe?' 'A hundred measures of wheat.' And he said to him, 'Take your account and write eighty.' 8Then the employer praised the dishonest manager for having shown such cleverness. This

shows that the men of this world are wiser in temporal matters than the children of light.

9 "And I say to you, use fleeting riches to make friends for yourselves, so that when it fails you may be welcome in the eternal mansions. [10]He who is honest in the smallest things is honest also in much; and he who is dishonest in small matters is dishonest also in much. [11]So if you have not been trustworthy in money matters, who will trust you with true riches? [12]And if you have not been trustworthy in what belongs to another, who will give you property to have as your own? [13]No servant can serve two masters at one time, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money."

Jesus Upholds the Validity of the Law

14 When the Pharisees heard Him say these things, they derided Him because they loved money. [15]Then He said to them, "You are people who seek the approval of men, but God knows your hearts. What men value highly is a curse in the sight of God. [16]You had the law and the prophets until John; since then the Gospel (good news) of the kingdom of God is being preached and they come crowding in. [17]Nevertheless, it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot over the letter 'i' in the law to become void. [18]Thus everyone who divorces his wife and marries another, commits adultery; and everyone who marries a woman who has been divorced from her husband, commits adultery.

The Rich Man and the Beggar

19 "There was a certain rich man who dressed in purple and fine linen, and who feasted in luxury every day. [20]There was also a certain poor man named Lazarus, who was covered with sores and had been laid at the rich man's door. [21]He longed to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. The dogs even came and licked his sores.

22 "The time came when the beggar died, and the angels carried him to 'Abraham's bosom.' The rich man also died and was buried. 23In hell and in torment, he opened his eyes and saw Abraham far, far away and Lazarus with him. 24And he cried out, 'Father Abraham, take pity on me! Send Lazarus to me; let him dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue. I am suffering terribly in this flame.' 25Abraham answered, 'My son, you must remember that when you were on earth you had an abundance of good things, while Lazarus had evil things. But now he is in comfort while you are in torment. 26And besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, nor can anyone come from you to us.

27 "Then the former rich man said, 'O Father, I plead with you to send him to my father's house. 28I have five brothers living. Oh, let him testify to them earnestly, to keep them from coming also to this place of misery!' 29Abraham said in reply, 'They have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them.' 30'No, Father Abraham,' he said. 'They need someone to come to them from the dead, and then they will repent.' 31'If they will not pay attention to Moses and the prophets,' Abraham answered, 'they will not be persuaded, even though one should rise from the dead.' "

CHAPTER 17

Jesus Teaches Concerning Forgiveness

JESUS said to His disciples, "Moral temptations are frequent, and they must come. But woe to the man who causes them! 2He would fare better if a millstone were put around his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should trap one of these little ones.

3 "Be on your guard! If your brother wrongs you, reprove

him; then, if he is sorry, forgive him. 4Even if he should sin against you seven times in one day, if he comes back to you seven times confessing his sorrow, forgive him."

5 The apostles said to the Lord, "Give us more faith!"
6The Lord answered, "If you had faith, even only as big as a tiny mustard seed, you could say to this tree, 'Be uprooted and transplanted into the sea!' and it would obey you.

Jesus Teaches Concerning Service

7 "If you had a servant, either a plowboy or a shepherd, would you say to him when he comes in from his work, 'Come now, sit down at the table'? 8Or wouldn't you say instead, 'Go get my supper ready, change your clothes and wait on the table while I eat and drink; you can eat and drink afterwards'? 9And would that servant get any special thanks for doing what he is ordered to do? I think not. 10So you, too, when you do everything you are told to do, must admit, 'We are just ordinary servants. We have done only what it was our duty to do.' "

The Healing of the Ten Lepers

11 Once, on His way to Jerusalem, Jesus took a road that followed the boundary between Samaria and Galilee. 12As He was about to enter one of the villages He was met by ten lepers. They stood at a distance 13and called out to Him, "O Jesus, Master! Do take pity on us!" 14When He saw them He said, "Go and present yourselves to the priest." They obeyed, and as they were going, they were cleansed. 15Then one of them, seeing that he was healed, turned back and thanked God with a loud voice. 16He fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus and thanked Him. But this man was a Samaritan. 17Jesus asked, "Were there not ten who were made clean? Where are the other nine? 18Has not anyone turned back to give praise to God except this stranger?" 19Then He said to him, "Rise and go your way. Your faith has healed you."

Spiritual Aspects of the Kingdom

20 Having been asked by the Pharisees as to when the kingdom of God was to come, He answered, "The kingdom of God does not come in such a manner that it can be seen with the eyes. 21So people cannot say, 'See! Here it is.' or 'There it is.' No! The kingdom of God is within you!"

Jesus Predicts His Second Coming

22 "There will come a time," He said to His disciples, "when you will wish you could see one of the days of the Son of Man, but your wish will not be granted. 23Some will say, 'Look here!' or 'Look there!' But make no move, do not follow them. 24When the Son of Man comes, He will come like the lightning, flashing and shining from one end of the sky to the other. 25But before that, He must suffer much and be rejected by this generation.

26 "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be in the days of the Son of Man. 27Then they ate, drank, married and were given in marriage until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28So it was also in the days of Lot — they ate and drank, they bought and sold, they planted and built. 29But on the very day that Lot left Sodom, it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all.

30 "Just so it will be on the day that the Son of Man returns. 31If a man is on the roof of his house on that day, but has his goods in the house, he must not come down to get them. Likewise, if a man is in the field, he must not come back to the house. 32Remember Lot's wife!

33 "Whoever tries to save his life will lose it, and whoever risks losing his life will save it. 34That night, I am telling you, there will be two men in the same bed, and one of them will be taken, the other left behind. 35Two women will be grinding together; one will be taken, the other left behind. 36Two men will be working in a field; one will be taken, the other left behind."

37 "But where will this take place?" they asked Him. He replied, "Where there is a dead body, the vultures will flock."

CHAPTER 18

The Parable of the Unjust Judge

HE TOLD them a parable to show that men should always pray and never lose courage. 2"In a certain city," He said, "there was a judge. This man had no fear of God, nor regard for his fellow men. 3And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying 'Defend me against my enemy.' 4For a time he refused to help her. Afterwards he began to think, 'I have no fear of God or respect for men. 5Nevertheless, I will help this widow, for she bothers me a lot. Otherwise she will wear me out by her perpetual coming and asking.' " 6Then the Lord said, "Did you note what this dishonest judge said to himself? 7And will not God then surely give justice and protection to His chosen people who cry out to Him day and night? 8I tell you that He will help them, and speedily. But will the Son of Man find faith on earth when he returns?"

The Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican

9 He told another parable to some people who had great confidence in their own uprightness, but a very low regard for others. 10"Two men," He said, "went up to the temple to pray. One of them was a Pharisee and the other was a tax collector. 11The Pharisee stood up and spoke this prayer for himself; 'O God, I thank You that I am not like the rest of men — greedy, unjust, adulterous, or even like this tax collector. 12I fast twice a week; I give a tenth of all I make.'

13 "The tax collector, on the other hand, kept at a distance and, without even daring to lift his eyes toward heaven, beat his breast and said, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' 14I say to you that this man, and not the other one,

went back to his house with forgiveness, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Jesus Blesses the Children

15 They brought to him also their babies, in order that He might touch them. But when the disciples saw it, they spoke sharply to them. 16Jesus then called them to Him and said, "Let the little children come to Me, and don't forbid them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. 17Indeed, I say to you that anyone who does not accept the kingdom of God as a little child, will not come into it at all."

18 There was a certain ruler who asked Him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?" 19"Why do you call Me good?" said Jesus to him. "No one is good except One — God. 20You know the commandments: 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, honor your father and mother. 21"Yes," he said, "and these I have kept from my youth."

22 When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "But you do lack one thing; go and sell everything that you have, divide the money among the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow Me." 23But on hearing this, the ruler became very sad, for he was very rich. 24When Jesus noticed how sorrowful he became, He said, "How difficult it is for those who have wealth to get into the kingdom of God! 25It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

26 His listeners then asked, "Who, then, can be saved?" 27He answered, "What is impossible with men is possible with God." 28Then Peter said, "Well, we left everything and followed You." 29"That is so," He answered, "and I assure you that anyone who leaves his house, or parents, or brothers, or wife, or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God,

[30]will receive in return many times more in this life, and everlasting life in the hereafter."

Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection

31 He called the Twelve to Him and said, "As you know, we are now going up to Jerusalem. And all that has been written by the prophets about the Son of Man will there be carried out. [32]He will be handed over to the non-Jews and He will be mocked, insulted and spat upon. [33]And after He has been flogged, He will be put to death. But He will rise again on the third day."

34 They did not understand anything of this. It was a mystery to them, and they could not make out what He was telling them.

The Healing of the Blind Man

35 As Jesus was approaching Jericho, there was a blind man sitting there by the wayside, begging. [36]When he heard a crowd going past, he asked what it was all about. [37]So they told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. [38]Thereupon he called out to Him, "Jesus, Son of David, take pity on me!" [39]The people walking in front of him spoke sharply to him, telling him to keep quiet, but he cried out all the more, "O Son of David, have pity on me!"

40 Then Jesus stopped and gave orders that the man should be brought to Him. When he had approached, Jesus stepped up and spoke to him. [41]"What do you want Me to do for you?" He asked. And he answered, "O Lord, I want to see!" [42]Jesus said to him, "See! Your faith has healed you." [43]And he received his sight at once and followed Him, giving God the glory. And all the people who witnessed this likewise gave praise to God.

CHAPTER 19

The Conversion of Zacchaeus

HE came to Jericho and passed through the city.
2And there was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the
head of the tax collectors, and was wealthy. 3He wanted to
see Jesus, to find out who He was. But he could not see
Him because of the crowd, for he was short of stature.
4Therefore, he ran on ahead and climbed up a sycamore
tree, hoping to get a glimpse of Him, for He was coming by
that way.

5 When Jesus came to that spot He looked up and saw
him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down,
for I want to visit you in your home today." 6And he has-
tened to come down, and received Him gladly. 7When the
people saw it, they all grumbled, for they said, "He is going
to stay with a man who is a notorious sinner."

8 As Zacchaeus stood there he said, "Lord, see! I give
half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have gotten
money from anyone wrongfully, I pay it back fourfold."
9Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house-
hold, since this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10For the
Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

The Parable of the Ten Coins

11 When they had heard this, He continued by telling
them a parable, because they supposed that the kingdom of
God was to be established immediately. 12Therefore He said,
"A certain nobleman went to a distant country to obtain a
kingdom for himself, and then to return. 13He called in ten
of his servants and gave them ten coins, saying to them,
'Make use of these till I return.' 14But his fellow citizens
hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We do not
want you to be our king.'

15 "But he returned with kingly authority, and directed

the servants to whom he had given money to come before him, so that he might know what each one had gained by the use of it. [16]The first one who came, said, 'Lord, your coin has increased ten-fold.' [17]And he said to him, 'Wonderful! You are a good servant; because you have been faithful in a very small matter, you will now have authority over ten cities.'

18 "The second man came up and said, 'Lord, your coin has increased to five.' [19]And he said also to this one, 'I will place you in charge of five cities.'

20 "And another reported, saying, 'Here is your coin, Sir. I have kept it for you, put away in a handkerchief. [21]I was afraid of you, because you are a tight-fisted man. You take what you have not laid down, and you reap where you have not sown.' [22]'So?' said the king in reply, 'then I will pass sentence on you, you wicked servant, out of your own mouth. You knew that I was a tight-fisted man, taking what I had not laid down and reaping where I had not sown. [23]Then, why did you not put my money in the bank, so that I could have drawn interest on it?'

24 "Then the king said to the bystanders, 'Take the coin from him and give it to the one who has ten.' [25]'But, Master,' they said to him, 'he has ten coins already.'

26 "I say to you," said Jesus, "that to those who have, more will be given; but to those who do not have, even what little they have will be taken from them. [27]Then the angry king said, 'As to my enemies who did not want me to be made king over them, bring them here and slay them before my eyes.' "

28 When He had told them this, He went on ahead of them, going toward Jerusalem.

Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem

29 When Jesus was drawing near to Bethphage and Bethany by the Mount of Olives, He sent two of His disciples on ahead. [30]"Go into the village before you," He said. "As

you come into the place, you will find there a colt tied, one on which no man has ever sat. Untie it and bring it to Me. 31Should anyone ask you, 'Why are you untying it?' just say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.' "

32 The messengers, therefore, set off and found things exactly as He had told them. 33Even as they were untying the colt, the owners asked, "Why are you untying it?" 34And their answer was, "The Lord has need of it." 35Then they led it to Jesus and, after throwing some of their coats on the colt, they mounted Jesus on it.

36 As He proceeded, the people spread their garments in the road before Him. 37And just as He was approaching the city where the Mount of Olives slopes down, the whole throng of His disciples began in great joy and loud voice to sing praises to God for all the mighty works they had seen. 38They cried out, "Blessed be the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest!"

39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell your disciples to stop this." 40"I tell you," he answered, "if they should keep silent, the stones themselves would cry out."

Jesus Weeps Over Jerusalem

41 When He drew near to the city and saw it, He wept. 42Then He said, "Would that you had known, at least on this your day, the conditions for your peace; but now they are hidden from your eyes. 43But a time is coming when your enemies will build an embankment around you; they will surround you and shut you in on every side. 44And they will dash you and your children to the ground, and there will not be left within you one stone upon another, all because you did not know the day of your visitation."

The Cleansing of the Temple

45 He went to the temple, and began to drive out those who were selling and buying in it. 46"It is written," He said

to them, "that 'My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of robbers!' " (*Isaiah* 56:7; *Jer.* 7:11).

47 Daily He taught in the temple, but meanwhile the chief priests and scribes and other leaders of the people were plotting to destroy Him. 48But they did not as yet discover any way to do so, because the people kept near Him, listening to His words.

CHAPTER 20

Jesus' Authority Questioned

THE chief priests, scribes and elders came to Him one day as He was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the Gospel. 2They asked Him, "By what authority do you do these things? Who gave you this authority? Now tell us." 3He answered them by saying, "Let Me also ask you one thing, and it is for you to answer it: 4Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?"

5 They discussed it among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will ask, 'Why then did you not believe him?' 6But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are convinced that John was a prophet." 7So they answered that they did not know from where it came. 8To which Jesus said, "Nor will I tell you by what authority I do these things."

The Parable of the Vineyard

9 He began to tell the people this parable:

"There was a man who had planted a vineyard and let it out to tenants, and then he left the country to be absent a long time. 10At the proper time he sent a servant to the tenants, to have them pay him his share of the crop from the vineyard, but the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. 11Then he sent another servant, but him, too, they gave a beating, besides insulting him and sending him away empty-handed. 12He tried sending a third servant, but,

after wounding him, they drove him away. [13]The owner of the vineyard then said, 'What shall I do? I will send my beloved son. Perhaps, when they see him, they will respect him.'

14 "But the tenants, on seeing him, reasoned in this way among themselves: 'He is the heir. Come, let us kill him, so his heritage will belong to us.' [15]Then they drove him out of the vineyard and killed him. Now what will the owner of the vineyard do to them? [16]He will come and destroy these tenants, and lease the vineyard to others."

When they heard it, they said, "God forbid!" [17]He looked at them then, and said, "It is written, 'The Stone the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone' (*Psalm* 118:22, 23). What does this mean? [18]Everyone who falls on that Stone will be broken to pieces, and everyone on whom it falls will be ground to powder."

The Question of Tribute

19 The scribes and chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, but they were afraid of the people. They understood, of course, that He had told this parable against them. [20]They kept watch on Him and sent out spies, men who passed as upright, who should try to seize upon something that He said, so as to deliver Him into the hands of the governor.

21 So they put a question to Him. "Teacher," they said, "we know that what you say and teach is correct, and that you show no partiality, but teach the way of God truly. [22]Now, is it right for us to pay tribute to Caesar, or is it not?" [23]He saw through their trick and said to them, "Why do you tempt Me? [24]Show Me a piece of money. Now, whose face and name are on it?" They said, "Caesar's." [25]He said to them, "Then pay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God!" [26]They could not find anything wrong in His talks to the people, and they were simply amazed at His answer to them, so they kept silent.

The Sadducees Question Jesus about the Resurrection

27 Also some of the Sadducees, who deny that there is a
resurrection, came to Him with a catch question. 28"Teacher,"
they said, "Moses laid down the law for us that if a man's
brother should die, leaving a wife but no children, then his
brother must marry her and raise up a family for his dead
brother. 29Once there were seven brothers. The first took a
wife and died childless. 30And the second took her, and he,
too, died childless. 31And the third took her; in fact, all the
seven took her in turn, then died, not any of them having
children. 32Last of all, the woman died. 33Now, whose wife
will she be when the dead shall rise again? Remember that
all seven had had her as wife."

34 Jesus gave them His answer. He said, "In this world
people marry and are given in marriage. 35But those who
will be considered worthy to attain to the world to come,
and to rise up from the dead, do not marry, nor are they
given in marriage. 36And they can never die any more, for,
being children of the resurrection, they are not only equal
to the angels, but they are the children of God. 37Then, as
to the resurrection of the dead, even Moses showed that in
his account of the burning bush. There he calls the Lord
the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of
Jacob. 38Truly, God is not the God of the dead, but of the
living, since all live for Him."

39 "Teacher," one of the scribes admitted, "You have
spoken well." 40After that they did not dare to try Him with
further questions.

Jesus Questions the Scribes

41 "What do they mean," He asked, "when they speak of
Christ as the Son of David? 42David himself, in the Book of
Psalms, says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit on My right
hand. 43And I will make Your enemies a footstool for Your
feet." ' 44David clearly calls Him 'Lord.' Then how can He
be his Son?" (*Psalm* 110:1).

45 He was talking to His disciples, but all the people were
listening. 46"Look out for the scribes," He said. "They enjoy
strutting about in long robes and being greeted in the busi-
ness places, and they like to sit in the front seats in the syna-
gogues and the places of honor at banquets. 47They rob
poor widows of their homes, while they make long prayers
for show. But they will surely get a heavier punishment."

CHAPTER 21

The Widow's Mite

LOOKING up, He saw men of means putting their
contributions into the money box. 2He saw also a poor
widow dropping in two small coins, worth one cent. 3"I tell
you truly," He said, "that this poor widow has really given
more than all of them. 4Why? Because all the others gave
their offering to God out of their abundance, whereas she,
out of her poverty, gave all she had to live on."

General Signs Preceding Christ's Return

5 While some were talking about the temple, saying that
it had such beautiful stones and was adorned with such con-
secrated offerings, He said, 6"As for these things that you
are now looking at, the day will come when not one stone
will be left here resting on another. They will all be thrown
down." 7They asked Him, "Teacher, when will this happen?
And what sign will there be, telling when this is about to
take place?" 8"Look out, lest you be misled," He said. "A
great number will come in My name, saying, 'I am He,' and
'The time is at hand.' But pay no attention to them. 9And
when you hear of wars and disturbances do not be terrified,
for these things must first take place, but the end will not
come so soon."

10 He also told them, "Nation will rise against nation,
and kingdom against kingdom. 11And there will be great

earthquakes in various places, as well as famines and pestilences. In the heavens, too, there will be terrific sights and awful signs.

12 "But, before all this happens, they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will turn you over to the synagogues and put you in prisons. They will drag you before kings and other rulers on account of My name. 13All this will give you a chance to testify. 14But make up your mind not to prepare beforehand what to say in defense. 15For I will at that time give you both eloquence and wisdom in such measure that no one opposing you will be able to refute you or resist.

16 "And you will be betrayed, yes, even by parents and brothers, by relatives and friends, and some of you will even be put to death. 17Everyone will hate you because you bear My name. 18Yet, not a hair of your head will perish. 19And by holding out, your lives will be victorious.

Prediction of the Destruction of Jerusalem

20 "You will see Jerusalem surrounded by armies. Then you will know that her downfall is at hand. 21Then those in Judea must take flight to the mountains, those who live in town must evacuate the city, and those in the country must remain there. 22For in those days of vengeance all that Scripture foretells will be fulfilled.

23 "Alas for those who are pregnant or are nursing babies in those days, for the misery in the land and the anger toward this people, will be great! 24They will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led captive among all nations. Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by pagan nations until the time of heathen dominion will have come to an end.

The Return of the Lord in Glory

25 "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, great distress and bewilderment among the nations of the earth, and a roaring and surging of the sea. 26Men's hearts will fail them from fear and foreboding as to what is coming

upon the world, for the forces in the heavens will be active.
[27]And then they will witness the Son of Man coming in a
cloud with great power and majesty. [28]When these events
begin to take place, look up and lift your heads, for your
redemption is near."

The Parable of the Fig Tree

29 He told them another parable, "Notice the fig tree,
and all the other trees. [30]As soon as they commence to put
out their leaves, you see it and know that summer is near.
[31]In the same way, when you see these events taking place,
you will know that the kingdom of God is near. [32]Indeed,
I can say that this generation will not pass away until all
this shall have taken place. [33]The heavens and the earth will
pass away, but My words will never pass away.

The Call to Watchfulness

34 "Be on your guard for fear that your hearts be weighed
down with overeating and drunkenness and the cares of this
life, and then that day may come on you suddenly, like a
snare. [35]For it will come upon all, no matter where they
dwell on the face of the earth. [36]Watch, therefore, at all
times, and pray that you may be counted worthy to escape
all this that is going to happen, and that you may stand be-
fore the Son of Man."

37 Every day He taught in the temple, but at night He
went out and took lodging at the Mount of Olives. [38]But
early each morning all the people came to hear Him in the
temple.

CHAPTER 22

The Conspiracy to Betray Jesus

NOW the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, called
the Passover, was drawing near. [2]And the chief priests and
scribes were plotting as to how they might put Him to
death, but they were afraid of the people.

3 Then Satan came into Judas, surnamed Iscariot, who
was one of the Twelve. 4He went and conferred with the
chief priests and rulers as to how he might betray Him into
their hands. 5They were very happy about that, and agreed
to pay him in cash. 6He agreed, and then looked for an
an opportunity to betray Him in the absence of a crowd.

The Preparation for the Passover

7 The Day of the Unleavened Bread came, on which the
Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8So Jesus sent out Peter
and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover meal for
us, that we may eat." 9"Where do You want us to prepare
it?" they asked Him. 10"Listen," He said to them, "as you
come to the city, you will be met by a man carrying a pitcher
of water. Follow him into the house to which he is going.
11Then say to the head of the house, 'The Teacher asks,
"Where is the guest room, in which I may eat the Passover
together with My disciples?" ' 12He will then show you an
upper room, large and furnished. Make ready there."

13 So they went and found things as He had told them,
and they made ready the Passover.

The Last Passover

14 When the hour arrived, He sat down at the table, and
with Him the twelve apostles. 15He said, "I have had a great
desire to keep this Passover with you, before I suffer death.
16I tell you that I will never eat it again until it is fulfilled in
the kingdom of God."

17 Then He took a cup and gave thanks and said, "Take
this and share it among you. 18Again, I tell you that I will
not at all drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of
God has come."

The Lord's Supper Instituted

19 He now took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it
to His disciples, saying, "This is My body, which is given
for you. Do this in remembrance of Me." 20And in like man-

ner, after the eating, He took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.

The Exposure of the Traitor

21 "And remember, the hand of My betrayer is on the table, near Me. 22The Son of Man will go this way, for so it has been foreordained, but woe to the man by whom He is betrayed!" 23Thereupon they began to question among themselves as to which of them would do such a thing.

Jesus Rebukes the Self-Seeking Disciples

24 An argument also began among them as to which one of them should be rated as the greatest. 25So He said to them, "Among the pagans, the kings lord it over them and those in authority are called benefactors. 26But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you be like the youngest, and the chief be like a servant. 27Now, who is the greater, the guest at the table, or the servant who is waiter? It is the guest, is it not? But see! I am here with you, but as your Servant.

28 "You have stayed with Me through My trials. 29As My Father has given Me a kingdom, so also I will give to you 30the right to eat and drink at My table, in My kingdom, yes, and to sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

31 The Lord added, "And you, Simon, Simon, listen! Satan is out to get you, so that he may sift you like wheat. 32But I have prayed for you, that your faith may not fail. And you must strengthen your brothers when you come back to Me." 33Peter said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go to prison and to die with You!" 34"Peter," He answered, "let Me tell you that the rooster will not crow today until you will have denied three times that you know Me."

The Disciples Warned of Future Conflicts

35 He asked them, "When I sent you out without purse,

provision bag or shoes, were you in need of anything?" "No, nothing," they answered. 36"But now," He continued, "if you have a purse, take it along, and also a provision bag, and if you do not have a sword, sell your coat and buy one. 37For, surely, there has to be fulfilled in Me what has been written about Me, namely, 'He was rated as a lawbreaker.' Yes, also this saying of Scripture about Me has to be fulfilled" (*Isaiah* 53:12).

38Then they said, "Look, Lord, we have two swords." He answered, "That is enough."

Jesus' Agony in Gethsemane

39 He now set out for the Mount of Olives, as He was in the habit of doing, and His disciples also came along. 40When He had reached the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not have to be tempted." 41He then walked away from them about a stone's throw, and fell on His knees, and prayed. 42"Father," He said, "if You are willing, take this cup away from Me. However, not My will but Yours be done!"

43 At this, an angel from heaven came and strengthened Him. 44Being in agony of soul, He continued to pray even more intensely. And His sweat became like great drops of blood, dripping to the ground.

45 Then He got up from prayer and went back to the disciples. He found them asleep from grief. 46So He spoke to them, saying, "Why are you sleeping? Wake up and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

The Betrayal of Jesus

47 He was still speaking when a mob arrived, and at the head of the mob was the man called Judas, one of the Twelve. He stepped up close to Jesus so that he could kiss Him. 48But Jesus said to him, "Judas, would you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" 49Those around Him saw what was about to take place and asked, "Lord, shall we fight with our swords?" 50And one of them struck at the high priest's

servant, cutting off his right ear. [51]Jesus said, "Allow them!" He then touched the ear and healed him.

Jesus is Arrested

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests and captains of the temple, and the elders who had come out against Him, "Have you come with swords and clubs as against a robber? [53]You never lifted a finger against Me while I was with you, day after day in the temple. But now you come under cover of darkness. It is your hour."

54 They then seized Him, led Him away, and took Him to the high priest's house. Peter followed at a distance.

Peter Denies His Lord

55 A fire had been made in the middle of the courtyard and, as people were seated around it, Peter joined them. [56]One of the maidservants, seeing him sitting in the firelight, stared at him a while and said, "This fellow was with him, too." [57]But he denied it, saying, "No, ma'am, I do not know Him!" [58]Shortly afterwards, another one noticed him and said, "Say! You are one of them!" But Peter answered, "No, sir, I am not!" [59]About an hour later another man insisted, "Surely, this man was with him, for he is a Galilean!" [60]But Peter said, "Sir, I do not know what you are talking about." And just then, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. [61]The Lord then turned and looked at Peter. And the words of the Lord came back to Peter, how He had said, "Before the rooster crows today, you will have denied Me three times." [62]And Peter went out, weeping bitterly.

Jesus Before the Sanhedrin

63 The men who kept guard over Jesus mocked Him and beat Him. [64]They blindfolded Him, struck Him in the face and kept heckling Him, "Come, prophesy! Tell us, who hit you in the face?" [65]And they said many other blasphemous things to Him.

66 Early the next day the elders of the people, together
with the chief priests and scribes, brought Him before their
council. 67"Tell us if you are the Christ," they said. He re-
plied, "If I were to tell you, you would not believe Me.
68And if I were to ask you some question, you would not
answer Me. 69Well, from now on, the Son of Man will be
seated in power at the right hand of God." 70And they all
exclaimed, "So, you are the Son of God?" And He replied,
"Yes, just as you say. I am." 71Then they declared, "What
further evidence do we need? We ourselves have heard it
from his own mouth!"

CHAPTER 23

Jesus Before Pilate

THE whole crowd rose up and brought Him to
Pilate. 2And they began to bring accusations against Him,
such as, "We found him perverting the people; he forbade
the payment of tribute to Caesar; he claims that he is a
King."

3 "Are you the King of the Jews?" Pilate asked Him.
He answered, "Yes, as you have said it." 4Pilate then said
to the chief priests and the crowd, "I have not discovered
anything blameworthy in this man." 5"But He stirs up the
people," they insisted. "He has been teaching throughout all
Judea, having started in Galilee and now down here."

Jesus Before Herod

6 When Pilate heard Galilee mentioned, he asked, "Is this
man a Galilean?" 7Being informed that He belonged under
the authority of Herod, he sent Him over to Herod, who
happened to be in Jerusalem at the time.

8 Herod was glad to see Jesus. For a long time he had
wanted to meet Him because he had heard so much about
Him, and he hoped to see Him perform some miracle. 9He

talked a great deal, asking many questions, but he did not get one word in reply. [10]The chief priests and scribes were also present, and they made violent accusations against Him.

11 Then Herod and his guard soldiers made a joke of Him and ridiculed Him. They dressed Him in a gaudy colored robe and sent Him back to Pilate. [12]And that very day Pilate and Herod, who had previously been enemies, became friends.

Jesus Again Before Pilate

13 Then Pilate called together the chief priests and rulers, as well as the people. [14]He said to them, "You brought this man to me, accusing him of misleading the people. But I assure you that when I examined him before you I found no fault in him. He is not guilty of any of the charges set up against him. [15]Nor did Herod find anything, for he sent him back to us. In short, he has not done anything that deserves the death punishment. [16]I will therefore give him a good flogging and then set him free."

Christ or Barabbas

17 They had a custom that at this festival the governor was obliged to set some prisoner free. [18]But they shouted loudly, urgently, in chorus, "Away with this man! We want you to free Barabbas!" [19]He was in prison for having started a riot in the city, and for murder.

20 Pilate, however, wanted to release Jesus, so he spoke to them again. [21]But they kept shouting, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" [22]Then, for the third time, he spoke to them, "Why? Tell me, what wrong has this man done? I can find nothing in him deserving of death. So I am just going to give him a whipping, and then let him go."

The Condemnation of Jesus

23 But they kept on shouting loudly, insistently, demanding that he be crucified. And finally, they and the chief

priests had their way. [24]That is, Pilate gave sentence that their demand should be carried out. [25]So, in accordance with that demand, he set the man free who had been imprisoned for riot and murder, but he turned Jesus over to them to be crucified.

The Crucifixion

26 And as they led Him away, they seized a man named Simon, of Cyrene, who was then just coming in from the country. They laid the cross on him, to carry behind Jesus. [27]A great band of people followed Him, including women who wept and sorrowed over Him.

28 Jesus turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep on My account, but rather weep for yourselves and your children. [29]Indeed, there will come a time when men will say, 'Blessed are the barren, the wombs that never bore children, the breasts that never gave milk!' [30]People then will begin to say to the mountains, 'Fall down on us!' and to the hills, 'Cover us!' [31]For, if they do such things to the green tree, what may not happen to the dry?"

32 There were also two others, both of them criminals, who were led along with Him to be put to death. [33]When they came to the place called Calvary (meaning Skull), they took and crucified Him and the two criminals there, the one to the right of Him, and the other on the left. [34]And Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they drew lots to divide His clothes among them.

35 The people stood looking on; also the rulers were with them, but they jeered at Him, saying, "He saved others. Now if he is the Christ, the Chosen One of God, let him save himself!" [36]The soldiers also mocked Him. And they came and offered Him vinegar. [37]They said, "If you are the king of the Jews, save yourself!" [38]Over Him there was an inscription, written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew letters, reading, "This is the King of the Jews."

The Two Robbers

39 One of the criminals who was being crucified taunted
Him. "If you are the Christ," he said, "then save yourself,
and us." 40The other criminal rebuked the first, saying,
"Have you no fear of God, since you are undergoing the
same punishment? 41You and I are being justly punished.
We are getting the due reward for our misdeeds. But this
Man has done nothing amiss." 42Then he said to Jesus,
"Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom."
43"Truly, I say to you," said Jesus in reply, "today you will
be with Me in Paradise!"

The Death of Jesus

44 When it was about noon, darkness overspread the
whole earth until three o'clock. 45The sun was darkened.
And the curtain in the temple was ripped through the middle.
46Then Jesus gave a loud outcry, saying, "Father, into Your
hands I commit My spirit." When He had said this, He died.

47 When the captain saw what had happened, he gave
praise to God, as he said, "This Man surely was righteous!"
48And all the people who had assembled to see the crucifixion, when they had seen what had taken place, went back
home, beating their breasts. 49But all His acquaintances, including the women who had come along with Him from
Galilee, stood looking on at a distance.

The Burial

50 There was a man by the name of Joseph. He was a
council member, a good and just man, 51who had not given
his consent to the purpose and deeds of the others. He was
from Arimathea, one of the Judean towns, and was himself
one of those who was expecting the kingdom of God. 52This
man went to Pilate and asked to have the body of Jesus.
53He took it down from the cross, wrapped it in a linen
sheet, and placed it in a tomb hewn out of rock, in which no
one had ever yet been buried.

54 It was the day of preparation, and the sabbath was coming on. 55The women who had come with Jesus from Galilee also followed. They saw the tomb, and how His body was placed. 56So they went back and prepared spices and perfumes, but on the sabbath they remained quiet, according to the commandment.

CHAPTER 24

AT EARLY dawn on the first day of the week the women went to the tomb, bringing along the spices they had prepared. There were some others with them. 2They found the stone had been rolled away from the tomb, but 3on entering, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And then it happened — while they were still standing there, all perplexed. See! Two men stood by them, in shining clothing. 5And as the women bowed their heads to the earth in fear, the men said to them, "Why do you seek the Living One among the dead? 6He is not here; He has risen! Remember what He told you while He was yet in Galilee, 7'It is necessary that the Son of Man be given over into the hands of wicked men, and be crucified, and that He rise again on the third day.' " 8They then recalled His words.

9 When they came back from the tomb they reported all these things to the Eleven and the rest. 10It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary, the mother of James, who brought the news to the apostles. 11But their story seemed to them more like idle talk, so they did not believe them.

12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb. There he stooped down to look inside, and saw the linen grave clothes lying by themselves. Then he went back to his companions, wondering at what had come to pass.

The Undiscerning Disciples

13 That same day two of the disciples were going to a village named Emmaus, some seven miles away from Jeru-

salem. [14]They were talking with each other about what had occurred. [15]Then, while they were conversing and reasoning about it all, Jesus, Himself, came up and walked along with them. [16]But their eyes were prevented from recognizing Him.

17 "And what were you talking about so earnestly as you were walking along?" He asked them. And they stood still, looking sad. [18]One of them, Cleopas by name, answered Him, "Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who hasn't heard of the events that have taken place here these last few days?" [19]"What events?" He asked. "The things about Jesus of Nazareth," they answered. "He was a Prophet, a Man mighty in deed as well as word, both before God and the people. [20]And imagine, the chief priests and our rulers had Him condemned to death, and they had Him crucified! [21]We had been hoping that He was the One who was to redeem Israel. And, besides, it is now already the third day since these things happened.

22 "But, on top of all this, some women of our group have startled us beyond measure. Early this morning they went to the tomb. [23]They did not find His body, but came back declaring that they had seen a vision of angels who had said that He is alive. [24]Some of our company then went to the tomb and found things exactly as the women had reported it, but they failed to see Him."

25 And He said to them, "O you foolish men, and in your hearts so slow to believe all that the Prophets have said! [26]It was necessary, was it not, that Christ should suffer all these things, and then enter into His glory?" [27]He continued to explain what is said about Himself in all the Scriptures, beginning with Moses and on through all the Prophets.

28 When they came up to the village to which they were going, He appeared intent on going farther. [29]But they pressed Him urgently to stay. "Stay with us," they said. "It is getting late. The day is far spent." Accordingly He went in to stay with them.

30 Then, as He sat at the table with them, He took bread,

blessed it and broke it, and gave it to them. 31Now their eyes could see, and they recognized Him! But He disappeared from their sight. 32And they said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as He was talking to us on the way, and as He was explaining the Scriptures to us?"

33 They then got up and went back at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven gathered, and some others with them. 34These told them, "The Lord has indeed risen, and has appeared to Simon. 35And they, in turn, told about what had occurred on the way, and how they had recognized Him in the breaking of the bread.

Jesus Appears to the Ten

36 Even while they were talking about these happenings, Jesus, Himself, stood there among them, and He said to them, "Peace be with you!" 37Frightened and terror-stricken, they imagined that they were seeing a ghost. 38But He said, "Why are you troubled? And why should doubts come up in your hearts? 39Look at My hands and My feet! See! It is I, Myself! Touch Me, and make sure. A ghost does not have flesh and bones such as I have." 40When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet.

41 But since they still couldn't believe it, due to sheer joy and astonishment, He said to them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" 42And they gave Him a piece of broiled fish, and some honey. 43These He took and ate in their presence.

Jesus' Final Instructions

44 Jesus said to them, "These are words that I spoke to you while I was yet with you, 'All things written concerning Me in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets and the Psalms, must be fulfilled.' " 45Then He opened their minds so that they could understand the Scriptures.

46 "Thus it is written," He said, "that Christ must suffer and rise again from the dead on the third day. 47Also, that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in

His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. [48]You are witnesses of these things. [49]And I will send down upon you what My Father has promised. But stay here in the city of Jerusalem until you are clothed with power from on high!"

50 When He had taken them out as far as to Bethany, He lifted up His hands and blessed them. [51]And, even while He was blessing them, He left them and was carried up to heaven. [52]They then bowed down to worship Him, and in great joy went back to Jerusalem. [53]There they were constantly in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen!

CHAPTER 1

The Deity and Pre-Incarnation of Jesus Christ

THE Word was in the beginning; the Word was with God, and the Word was God. [2]He was with God in the beginning. [3]All things were made by Him and nothing that was made came into being without Him. [4]In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men. [5]The Light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not overcome it.

6 There was a man sent from God whose name was John. [7]He came to be a witness, to tell about the Light, so that men through him might believe. [8]He was not the Light, but came to bear witness of the Light.

9 The True Light, which enlightens every man, was coming into the world. [10]He was in the world — the world that had come into being through Him — yet the world did not know Him. [11]He came to His own world, yet His own people did not welcome Him. [12]But to those who welcomed Him, to those believing on His name, He gave the right to be the children of God. [13]These are born, not of blood, nor the desires of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God. [14]And the Word became Flesh and lived among us, and we saw His glory, a glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth.

The Work and Testimony of John the Baptist

15 John bore witness about Him, and cried out, saying, "This is He of whom I spoke: 'The One who comes after me takes rank above me, for He was before Me.' " [16]Out of His fulness we have all received spiritual blessings, grace upon grace. [17]For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. [18]No one has ever seen God. The only born Son, who is in the intimate presence of the Father, has made Him known.

19 Now this is the witness of John, given when the Jews

of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask Him, "Who are you?" [20]He answered frankly. He did not refuse, but answered openly, "I am not the Christ." [21]"What then?" they asked him. "Are you Elijah?" He answered, "I am not." "Are you the prophet?" He answered, "No." [22]Therefore, they said to him, "Who are you? We must give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said, "I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness,
'Make straight the way of the Lord!'
as the Prophet Isaiah said" (*Isaiah* 40:3).

24 Now those who had been sent were from among the Pharisees. [25]They questioned him again. "Why do you baptize," they asked him, "if you are neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet?"

26 "I baptize with water," John answered, "but among you stands One whom you do not know. [27]He it is who, though He comes after me, is put before me, whose shoestring I am unworthy to untie."

28 These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day, upon seeing Jesus coming to him, he said, "See! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! [30]This is He of whom I spoke, 'There comes a Man after me who is put before me, because He was before me.' [31]I myself did not know Him, but I have come baptizing with water that He might be made known to Israel."

32 Then John testified, "I saw the Spirit come down as a dove from heaven and rest on Him. [33]I did not know Him then, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The One on whom you see the Spirit coming down and abiding, He is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' [34]I have seen and have borne witness that He is the Son of God."

Andrew and Peter Called As Disciples

35 The next day John was standing with two of his disciples. [36]Then, seeing Jesus as He walked, he said, "See! He

is the Lamb of God!" [37]The two disciples, having heard what he said, followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned about and, seeing them come after Him, asked them, "What are you looking for?" They answered, "Rabbi (meaning Teacher), where are You staying?" [39]He said to them, "Come and see." So they followed Him and saw where He was living, and stayed with Him the rest of the day. It was then four o'clock in the afternoon.

40 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who had heard John's remark and had followed Jesus. [41]He first sought out Simon, his own brother, and told him, "We have found the Messiah!" (which means the Christ, the Anointed One). [42]He led him to Jesus, and when Jesus looked at him He said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, which means Peter — a Rock."

Philip and Nathanael Called

43 The following day Jesus wished to set out for Galilee. Meeting Philip, He said to him, "Follow Me." [44]Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the town of Andrew and Peter. [45]Philip met Nathanael and said to him, "We have found the One whom Moses wrote about in the Law, and whom the prophets wrote about — Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph." [46]"Nazareth?" said Nathanael. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip replied, "Come and see!"

47 When Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, He said to him, "See! There is a true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit." [48]"How do You know me?" asked Nathanael. Jesus answered, "I saw you under the fig tree before Philip talked to you." [49]Nathanael said to Him, "Teacher, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel." [50]Jesus answered and said to him, "Do you believe because I said to you that I had seen you under the fig tree? You shall see greater wonders than that!" [51]And He added, "Yes, truly I say to you all, you shall see heaven opened and God's angels going up and coming down on the Son of Man."

CHAPTER 2

The Miracle of the Wine at Cana

THREE days later there was a wedding in Cana
of Galilee. Jesus' mother was there. [2]Jesus also was invited
to the wedding, together with His disciples. [3]But the wine ran
short. So Jesus' mother said to Him, "They have no wine."
[4]Jesus said to her, "Mother, what is that to Me and to you?
My hour has not yet come." [5]His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He tells you, do it."

6 Now, there were six stone pots, each holding some twenty
to thirty gallons, standing there for the purpose of Jewish
ceremonial washing. [7]Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots
with water," and they filled them to the brim. [8]Then Jesus
said, "Now, dip out some and bring it to the head steward."
They did so. [9]When the head steward tasted the water which
had become wine, he called the bridegroom. He did not know
where it had come from, though the waiters who had drawn
the water knew, and he said to the groom, [10]"Everyone sets
out his good wine first, and then, after they have drunk
deeply, the poorer wine, but you have kept the good wine
until now!"

11 This beginning of His miracles was made by Jesus at
Cana in Galilee. He thereby revealed His greatness, and His
disciples believed on Him.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

12 After this He went down to Capernaum with His
mother, His brothers and His disciples, but they did not stay
there many days. [13]The Passover of the Jews being near,
Jesus went up to Jerusalem. [14]In the temple He found dealers in oxen and sheep and doves. Also the money-changers
were seated there. [15]Then, having made Himself a whip of
cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with their sheep
and oxen. He poured out the coins of the money-changers

and overturned their tables. [16]And to those who sold doves He said, "Take these things out! Don't make My Father's house a place of buying and selling!" [17]Then the disciples recalled that it is written in Scripture, "Zeal for Your house consumes Me."

The Jews Ask for a Sign

18 Then the Jews challenged Him, saying, "What sign of authority do you show us, since you are doing these things?" [19]Jesus replied, "Tear this temple down, and in three days I will restore it." [20]The Jews then said, "It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will you rebuild it in three days?" [21]He, however, was speaking about His body as the temple. [22]So, later, when He had risen from the dead, then His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed what was written and what Jesus had said.

23 While He was in Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover, many, on seeing the miracles that He did, believed on His name. [24]But Jesus did not trust Himself to them, for He knew all men. [25]And He had no need of anyone telling Him about man, for He knew what was in man.

CHAPTER 3

Nicodemus Comes to Jesus

AMONG the Pharisees there was a man named Nicodemus, who was a leader among the Jews. [2]He came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Master, we know that You are a Teacher come from God, for no one could do the miracles You do unless God were with him."

The New Birth Proclaimed

3 Jesus answered him, "I tell you, truly, unless one is born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." [4]Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when He is

old? He cannot enter his mother's womb and be born a second time, can he?" [5]Jesus said to him, "I assure you, this is true: Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot come into the kingdom of God. [6]That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

7 "Do not wonder that I said to you, 'You must be born from above.' [8]The wind blows wherever it wills and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."

The New Birth Explained

9 "But how can these things be?" asked Nicodemus. [10]Jesus answered and said to him,

"Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not know these things? [11]I tell you the truth: We speak of what We know, and bear witness of what We have seen, yet you do not accept Our witness. [12]If I tell you about earthly things and you do not believe, how will you then believe if I tell you about heavenly things?

13 "No one has gone up to heaven except He who came down from heaven. [14]And, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, [15]so that all who believe on Him may have everlasting life. [16]For God so loved the world that He gave His only born Son, that all who believe on Him shall not die, but have everlasting life. [17]For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but He sent Him that the world might be saved by Him. [18]One who believes on Him shall not be condemned, but one who does not believe stands condemned already, because he does not believe on the name of God's Only Son.

19 "This is the judgment, that though the Light has come into the world, yet men have loved darkness rather than the Light, for their works were wicked. [20]For everyone who does wrong hates the light and stays away from it, else his deeds would be found out. [21]But he who follows the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be shown to have been done in God."

The Further Testimony of John the Baptist

22 After these events Jesus and His disciples came into
the land of Judea, and there He stayed with them and bap-
tized. 23John, too, was baptizing at Aenon, near Salim, for
there were many springs of water there, and people came and
were baptized. 24For John was not yet thrown into prison.

25 A dispute about cleansing then arose between John's
disciples and a man from Judea. 26They came to John and
said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jor-
dan, of whom you testified, behold, He is Himself baptizing
people, and they are all flocking to Him."

27 John answered, and said, "A man can claim nothing
unless it has been given him from heaven. 28You are my
witnesses that I have said, 'I myself am not the Christ, but
rather I am His forerunner.' 29He who has the Bride is the
Bridegroom. But the Bridegroom's friend, who stands at His
side and listens, rejoices greatly at the Bridegroom's voice.
Such is my joy, and it is complete. 30He must grow greater
and greater, and I must become less and less.

31 "He who comes from above is above all. He who is of
the earth is of the earth. He who comes from heaven is over
all. 32He bears witness of what He has seen and heard, yet
no one believes His witness. 33Whoever accepts His witness
certifies that God is true. 34For He whom God has sent
speaks God's Word, and God gives Him the Spirit without
limit. 35The Father loves the Son, and has given all things
into His hand. 36He who believes on the Son has everlasting
life, but he who does not believe on the Son shall not see
life, and the wrath of God rests on him."

CHAPTER 4

The Woman at the Well

NOW, the Lord knew that the Pharisees had
heard the report that Jesus was making more disciples than

John, and was baptizing. [2]It was, however, not Jesus Himself who baptized, but His disciples. [3]Then He left Judea, going again into Galilee, [4]but He had to go through Samaria. [5]And He came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the place that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. [6]And Jacob's well was there.

So Jesus, tired from His journey, sat down by the well. It was then about noon. [7]A Samaritan woman came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." [8]His disciples, meanwhile, had gone to town to buy food. [9]The Samaritan woman said to Him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask me, a Samaritan woman, for a drink?" She said this because the Jews had no dealings with Samaritans.

10 Jesus answered, "If you had known Who it is that said to you, 'Give Me to drink,' you would have asked of Him, and He would have given you living water." [11]The woman said, "You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep; where will you obtain the living water? [12]Are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well, and who drank from it himself, with his sons and his cattle?"

The Living Water

13 "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again," Jesus answered her. [14]"But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst any more, for the water that I will give him will become within him a well bubbling up into everlasting life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never again be thirsty, and never again have to come way out here to draw water."

The True Basis of Worship

16 "Go," He said to her, "call your husband and come back here." [17]The woman answered, "I have no husband." Jesus said, "You are right when you say, 'I have no husband.' [18]You have had five husbands, but the one you now have is not your husband. What you said is true."

19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I see that You are a
prophet. 20Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you
Jews say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to
worship."

21 "Woman," said Jesus to her, "believe Me that the time
is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this
mountain nor in Jerusalem. 22You do not know what you
worship, but we know what we worship, for salvation is of
the Jews. 23But, the hour is coming — and now is near —
when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit
and in truth, for it is such worshipers the Father wants. 24God
is a Spirit, and those who worship Him must do so in spirit
and in truth."

Jesus, the Messiah

25 "I know," said the woman to Him, "that the Messiah
will come — the Christ, as they call Him — and when He
comes He will tell us everything." 26Jesus said to her, "I am
He — I, who am talking to you!"

27 Just then the disciples returned, and they were amazed
to find Him talking to a woman. No one asked, however,
"What do you want?" or "Why are You talking with her?"
28At this, the woman, leaving her water-pail behind, set off
to town, and said to the people, 29"Come and see a Man who
told me everything that I ever did. 30Is not this the Christ?"
The people of the town then came out to see Him.

The Food of the Spirit

31 Meanwhile, the disciples urged Him, "Master, eat
something." 32But He answered them, "I have food which
you do not know about." 33The disciples then said to one an-
other, "Can someone have brought food to him?" 34"My
food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and
to finish His work. 35Don't say, 'It is still four months till
harvest.' Look! I say to you, lift your eyes and see the fields,
how they are already white for harvesting. 36The reaper not

only gets wages, but he also gathers fruit for everlasting life,
so that both the sower and the reaper may be glad together.
[37]For this saying holds good, 'One man sows and another
reaps.' [38]I sent you to reap where you had not sown. Others
have sown, and you have come in for the reaping."

Jesus and the Samaritans

39 Many of the Samaritans had believed on Him at the
woman's word when she declared, "He told me everything
that I ever did." [40]So when the Samaritans came to Him,
they begged Him to stay with them, and He remained there
two days. [41]And many more believed on Him because of
what He said. [42]They said to the woman, "It is no longer
because of your word that we believe, for we have heard
Him ourselves, and we know that He is truly the Saviour of
the world."

43 Then, after two days, He went on from there into Gal-
ilee. [44]True, Jesus Himself had said that a prophet has no
honor in his own fatherland. [45]Still, when He came back to
Galilee, the Galileans welcomed Him, for they had seen all
the things that He did at the festival in Jerusalem, for they,
too, had been there.

The Healing of the Nobleman's Son

46 Jesus returned, therefore, to Cana of Galilee, where
He had made water into wine. And a certain officer, whose
son was sick in Capernaum, was there. [47]Having heard that
Jesus had come back from Judea into Galilee, he went to
Him and begged Him to come down and heal his son, for
he was about to die. [48]But Jesus said to him, "You will not
believe at all unless you see signs and wonders." [49]"Sir,"
said the nobleman to Him, "come down before my boy dies."
[50]Jesus answered him, "Go! your son will live."

The man, believing what Jesus said to him, went his way.
[51]As he was still on his way homeward his servants met him,
bringing word that his son was better. [52]Then he asked them

at what time the crisis had passed, and they told him, "Yesterday at one o'clock the fever left him." [53]The father then knew that it was the exact hour in which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." And he believed, he and his whole household.

54 This was the second miracle that Jesus did when He came from Judea to Galilee.

CHAPTER 5

The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda

AFTER this, there was a Jewish festival, and Jesus went to Jerusalem. [2]In Jerusalem, at the Sheep Gate, there is a pool called Bethesda, with five porches. [3]Within these there lay a great number of sick folk — blind, lame, and paralyzed — who were waiting for the water to be stirred. [4]For an angel came down at times and put the water in motion, and whoever stepped into the water first after it had been stirred up was made well, no matter what sickness he had.

5 There was a man there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. [6]When Jesus saw him lying there, knowing that he had been sick for a long time, He said to him, "Would you like to get well?" [7]"Sir," the sick man answered Him, "I have no one who can put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, so when I come another steps in right ahead of me." [8]Jesus said to him, "Get up, take your bed and walk." [9]And immediately the man became well. He took up his bed and walked. But that day was the sabbath.

10 "It is the sabbath," said the Jews to the man who had been healed, "and it is not lawful for you to take up your bed." [11]He answered them, "The man who made me well said to me, 'Take up your bed and walk.'" [12]"Who is this fellow," they asked him, "who said to you, 'Take up your bed and walk'?" [13]But the man who had been healed did not

know who He was, for, due to the crowd in that place, Jesus had slipped away.

14 Afterwards Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, "Now that you have been made well, sin no more, else something worse may happen to you." 15The man went his way and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had healed him.

The Sabbath Question

16 Because of this, the Jews persecuted Jesus. Yes, because He did these things on the sabbath, they sought to kill Him. 17But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I also work." 18The Jews therefore wanted all the more to kill Him, for He had not only broken the sabbath but had also called God His own Father, thereby making Himself equal to God.

Jesus Justifies Himself

19 Then Jesus answered them, saying, "The Son cannot do anything by Himself, unless He sees the Father doing it. Whatever the Father does, the Son does in the same way. 20For the Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He does. And He will show Him still greater works than these, to make you wonder. 21Even as the Father awakens the dead and makes them live, so also the Son gives life to whom He wills. 22Nor does the Father pass judgment on anyone, for He has given all judgment to the Son, 23so that all shall honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who honors not the Son honors not the Father who has sent Him.

24 "I tell you a most solemn truth — anyone who hears My Word and believes Him who sent Me, has everlasting life. And he will not be judged, for he has already come out of death into life.

The Two Resurrections

25 "Yes, I assure you, the time is coming — and is now at hand — when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of

God, and those who hear shall live. [26]For as the Father has life in Himself so, too, He has given the Son to have life in Himself. [27]And He has given Him full authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. [28]Don't be amazed at this. For the time is coming when everyone in the graves will hear His voice. [29]And they will come out. Those who have done good will rise again to live, but those who have done evil will rise again to be judged.

Jesus' Testimony to John and to Himself

30 "Of Myself I can do nothing. As I hear, so I judge. But my judgment is righteous, for I seek not My own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me. [31]If I bear witness about Myself, My testimony is not valid. [32]But I have another Witness, and I know that the testimony He gives about Me is valid.

33 "You sent to John and he told you the truth. [34]No, I am not taking the testimony of a man. I am saying this so that you may be saved. [35]He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing to rejoice for an hour in his light. [36]But I rely on weightier testimony than John's. In the works My Father gave Me to carry through — the very works I am doing — there is sufficient testimony that the Father has sent Me. [37]The Father who sent Me has Himself borne witness to Me. You, however, have never heard His voice, [38]nor have you seen His form. And you have not kept His word in your heart, for you do not believe the One whom He sent.

39 "You search the Scriptures, for you think that in them you have everlasting life, and they are the very writings that testify about Me. [40]Yet you will not come to Me in order to have life. [41]I do not seek honor among men, [42]but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in your hearts. [43]For I have come in the name of My Father, and yet you do not welcome Me. If another comes in his own name, you will welcome him. [44]How can you believe, you who take honor from one another, but do not seek the honor that is from the only God?

45 "Do not think that I shall accuse you before the Father. There is one who does accuse you, however. It is Moses, the very one in whom you put your trust. 46If you really believed Moses, you would also believe Me, since he wrote about Me. 47But if you do not believe his writings, how are you ever going to believe My Words?"

CHAPTER 6

The Feeding of the Five Thousand

AFTER this Jesus went over to the other side of the Lake of Galilee, that is, the Sea of Tiberias. 2A great many people followed Him, for they had seen the wonderful cures that He had worked upon the ailing. 3Then Jesus went up on a mountain and sat down with His disciples. 4The Passover, the great Jewish festival, was near.

5 Jesus looked around and, seeing the great crowd that was coming up toward Him, He remarked to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread to feed all these people?" 6Jesus said this to test him, for He knew what He was about to do. 7Philip answered him, "Forty or fifty dollars' worth of bread will not be enough to give each one even a bite."

8 One of the disciples — Andrew, Simon Peter's brother — said to Him, 9"There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fishes, but what is that among so many?" 10Jesus thereupon said, "Have the people sit down." There was much grass at that place, so they sat down, about five thousand of them.

11 Then Jesus took the loaves and, having given thanks, gave them to the disciples, and they served those who were seated; and the fish was served in the same way, as much as they wished. 12And after they had had enough, He said to His disciples, "Gather together the leftovers, so nothing will be wasted." 13So they gathered the leftovers, and filled twelve hand-baskets with pieces of the five barley loaves, after all had eaten.

14 When the people saw the miracle that Jesus had done,
they said, "Truly, this is the Prophet who was to come into
the world."

Jesus Walks on the Sea

15 Since Jesus knew that they were about to come and
take Him by force to make Him King, He withdrew once
more to the mountain, alone by Himself. 16Meanwhile, to-
ward evening, the disciples went down to the lake. 17They
got into their boat and were going to cross over to Caper-
naum. It was already dark, yet Jesus had not come back to
them. 18And the sea was getting rough, due to a strong wind
blowing. 19When they had rowed three or four miles they saw
Jesus walking on the sea and, as He came near the boat,
they got frightened. 20But He called to them, "It is I. Don't
be afraid." 21Then they willingly took Him into the boat, and
the boat went straight to the shore for which they were
headed.

Jesus Rebukes the Crowd

22 The next morning the crowd which was still on the
other shore of the lake learned that no other boat had been
there except the one in which the disciples had embarked;
also that Jesus had not gone into the boat along with His
disciples, but that they had left by themselves. 23There were,
however, other boats that had landed near the spot where
they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.
24So, when the people understood that neither Jesus nor His
disciples were there any longer, they also got into boats and
went to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

25 And when they found Him there on that side of the
lake, they said to Him, "Master, when did You get here?"
26Jesus answered them and said, "I tell you truly, you are
looking for Me not because you saw signs, but because you
ate of the bread and had your fill. 27Do not work for the
food that perishes, but rather for the food that lasts forever,

which the Son of Man will give you, for the Father has set His seal on Him."

28 "What does it mean, to do the works of God?" they asked Him. 29"This is God's work," Jesus answered them, "that you believe on Him whom He has sent." 30They said to Him, "What sign can you show us, so that we can see it, and believe you? What is your wonder-work? 31Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, 'He gave them bread to eat from out of heaven' " (*Exodus* 16:15).

Jesus, the Bread of Life

32 Then Jesus said to them, "I assure you, Moses did not himself give you the bread out of heaven, but My Father gives you the true Bread out of heaven. 33For the Bread of God is that which comes out of heaven and gives life to the world." 34"Sir," they said to Him, "give us this bread always."

35 Jesus said to them, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes on Me shall not thirst. 36Now I have told you — though you have seen Me, yet you do not believe. 37Listen: All whom the Father has given Me shall come to Me, and he who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. 38For I came down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that I should not lose one of those whom He gave Me, but that I should raise them up again on the last day. 40Yes, this is the will of the Father who sent Me, that every one who sees the Son and believes on Him shall have everlasting life, and I shall raise him up on the last day."

The Jewish Objectors

41 The Jews therefore grumbled at Him for having said, "I am the Bread that came down from heaven." 42And they argued, "Is not this fellow Jesus, Joseph's son, whose father and mother we know? What does he mean by saying, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

The Bread of Life Discourse Continued

43 "Don't grumble among yourselves," said Jesus to them.
44"No one can come to Me unless the Father who has sent
Me draws him, and then I will raise him to life on the last
day. 45It is written in the Prophets, 'They shall be taught of
God.' 46No one has ever seen the Father except He who is
from God. He has seen the Father. 47I say to you most
solemnly, he who believes on Me has everlasting life. 48I am
the Bread of Life. 49Your fathers ate the manna in the wil-
derness, and they died. 50But this is the Bread which comes
out of heaven, of which one may eat and never die. 51I am
the Living Bread that came out of heaven. Whoever eats of
this Bread shall live forever. The Bread that I will give you
is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

52 At this, the Jews argued among themselves. They said,
"How can he give us his flesh to eat?" 53Jesus spoke to them,
therefore, as follows.

"Most solemnly I say to you, if you do not eat the flesh
of the Son of Man and do not drink His blood, you have no
life in you. 54Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood
has everlasting life, and I will raise him up on the last day.
55For My flesh is truly a food, and My blood is truly a drink.
56Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood, he shall be
in Me and I in him. 57Just as the living Father has sent Me,
and I live through Him, so also shall the one who feeds on
Me live through Me. 58This is the Bread that came down
from heaven. It is unlike that which your fathers ate, and yet
died. Whoever eats of this Bread shall live forever."

59 He spoke thus while teaching in a synagogue at
Capernaum.

The Offended Disciples Leave

60 Many of His disciples who had listened to Him then
said, "This teaching is gruesome. Who can stand to hear it?"
61Conscious that the disciples were complaining about His
teaching, Jesus said to them, "Did this offend you? 62Then

what would you say if you should see the Son of Man go up to where He was before? 63What gives life is the Spirit; the flesh is of no help. The words I speak to you are spirit and life, 64but there are some among you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and also who would betray Him. 65He said, furthermore, "So that is why I told you that no one can come to Me unless the Father enables him to do so."

66 From that time on, many of His disciples turned back and no longer associated with Him.

Peter's Confession of Faith

67 Then Jesus asked the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave Me?" 68And Simon Peter spoke up, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life. 69We believe and know You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." 70Then Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil." 71Here He meant Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, for he, though one of the Twelve, was planning to betray Him.

CHAPTER 7

Jesus Goes to the Feast of Tabernacles

AFTER these events Jesus went about in Galilee. He did not wish to stay in Judea, for the Jews were trying to kill Him. 2Now the festival of the Jews, called the Feast of Tabernacles, was near. 3Jesus' brothers therefore said to Him, "Leave this place and go to Judea; let Your disciples see the deeds You do. 4For no one does things in secret if he wants to be in the public eye. And, since You are doing these wonders, show Yourself to the world." 5Not even His brothers had any faith in Him.

6 Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but any time is suitable for you. 7The world cannot hate you,

but it hates Me, for I testify against it, that its works are wicked. [8]Yes, go on to the feast but I am not going yet, for My time has not fully come."

9 And having told them this, He stayed on in Galilee. [10]But after His brothers had gone on to the feast, He also went, not openly, but rather in secret.

11 Meanwhile, the Jews at the feast were looking for Him, and kept saying, "Where is He?" [12]And among the crowds there was much heated discussion about Him. Some said, "He is a good man." Others declared, "No! For he is leading the people astray." [13]Still no one expressed himself publicly about Him, for fear of the Jews.

The Source of Jesus' Teaching

14 Then, about the middle of the feast, Jesus came to the temple and taught. [15]The Jews, in wonderment, said, "How does this man know books if he has not gone to school?"

16 Jesus answered them, saying, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. [17]If anyone is willing to do His will he will know about the teaching, whether it is from God or whether I speak from Myself. [18]The man who speaks for himself seeks his own glory, but the one who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him. [19]Did not Moses give you the Law? And yet, not one of you keeps the Law. Why do you try to kill Me?"

20 "You have a devil," the crowd shouted back at Him. "Who is trying to kill You?"

21 Jesus replied, "I did one deed which made you wonder. [22]Moses gave you circumcision for a purpose — no, it was not Moses, but the fathers before him — and you circumcise a child, even on the sabbath. [23]If you circumcise a child on a sabbath day in order that the Law of Moses shall not be broken, why are you bitter against Me for having made a man entirely well on the sabbath? [24]Don't judge according to appearances, but make honest judgments."

Jesus' Messianic Proclamation

25 Some of the Jerusalem people then remarked, "Isn't this the man they want to kill? 26But look! He is speaking openly and they aren't saying a thing to him. Can it be that the rulers really think that he is truly the Christ? 27No! We know where this fellow is from. But the Messiah — if He ever comes — no one will know from where He comes."

28 Then, as He was teaching in the temple, Jesus cried out loudly, "You not only know Me, but you know from where I come. I surely did not come of Myself. I was sent to you by One who is true, but you do not know Him. 29But I know Him, for I came from Him, and He Himself sent Me."

30 Then they wanted to seize Him, yet no one laid hands on Him, for His time had not yet come. 31But many of the people believed on Him and said, "When Christ comes, will He work more miracles than this man?"

32 The Pharisees overheard the crowd whispering these things about Him, so they and the chief priests sent officers to arrest Him. 33Jesus therefore said to them, "I shall be with you only a little longer, then I shall go back to Him who sent Me. 34You will search for Me but will not find Me, for where I go you cannot come."

35 At this, the Jews said to one another, "Where is he going to go that we cannot find him? Will he go to the Jews scattered among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks? 36What does he mean by saying, 'You will search for Me but will not find me,' and 'Where I am you cannot come'?"

Jesus' Promise of the Holy Spirit

37 On the last and greatest day of the feast Jesus stood up and called out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38Out of the heart of the one who believes in Me there will flow rivers of living water, as the Scripture declares." 39This He said about the Holy Spirit who would

come upon those who believed on Him. The Spirit had not yet been given, for Jesus was not yet glorified.

The Division of Opinion Among the People

40 On hearing His words, many among the crowds said,
"Surely, this is the Prophet!" 41Others said, "He is the
Christ!" But others questioned, "No, the Christ was not to
come out of Galilee, was He? 42Doesn't the Scripture say
that the Christ should come out of the seed of David, and
from the little town of Bethlehem, where David lived?" 43So
there was a division among the masses concerning Him.
44Some of them wanted to have Him arrested, yet no one
laid hands on Him.

45 When the officers came back to the high priests and
Pharisees, they were asked, "Why didn't you bring him back
with you?" 46Their reply was, "No man ever spoke as this
man speaks." 47The Pharisees exclaimed, "Have you, too,
been led astray? 48Consider, has anyone of the rulers be-
lieved on him, or any of the Pharisees? Have they? 49And
as for this rabble, it is ignorant of the Law, and accursed."

50 Nicodemus, one of them, the man who had visited
Jesus one night, ventured to say to them, 51"Our law does
not condemn a man before he has had a hearing, does it,
and before we know what he has done?" 52"Well, well,"
they answered him, "so you, too, have come out of Galilee?
Search the Scriptures and see for yourself that no prophet
ever came out of Galilee." 53Then everyone went home.

CHAPTER 8

The Woman Taken in Adultery

JESUS had gone over to the Mount of Olives.
2But at daybreak He again went back to the temple. All the
people gathered around Him and He sat down and taught
them.

3 Then the scribes and Pharisees came to Him, bringing
along a woman who had been taken in the act of adultery.
And they placed her in their midst. 4Then they said to Him,
"Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of adul-
tery. 5In the Law, Moses had told us to stone such women.
Now, what do you have to say about it?"

6 They were trying to trap Him, so that they might find
something against Him. But Jesus stooped down and began
to write on the ground with His finger. 7Since they kept ques-
tioning Him, He got up and said to them, "Let him among
you who has no sin be the first to cast a stone at her."
8Again He leaned forward to write on the ground. 9But they
had heard Him and, accused by their own conscience, they
went away one by one, beginning with the oldest, till they
all were gone. And Jesus was left alone with the woman, who
was still standing before Him.

10 Then Jesus raised Himself up and, seeing no one there
except the woman, He said to her, "Your accusers — where
are they? Did no one condemn you?" 11"No one, Lord," she
replied. "Then, neither will I condemn you," said Jesus.
"Go, and sin no more."

Jesus' Discourse on the Light of the World

12 Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of
the World. He who follows Me will in no wise walk in the
dark, but will have the Light of Life."

13 "You are testifying about yourself," objected the Phar-
isees. "Your testimony is therefore not sound."

14 "Even if I do testify about Myself," answered Jesus,
"My testimony is true. For I know where I came from, and
where I am going, but you do not know where I came from,
or where I am going. 15You condemn Me on the basis of
what you see; I condemn no one. 16And even if I should
condemn, My judgment would be true, for I am not alone
— the Father, who sent Me, is with Me. 17Moreover, in your
own law it is written that the witness of two men is valid.

[18]I bear witness about Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness about Me." [19]"Do tell, where is your father?" they asked Him. Jesus answered, "You know neither Me nor My Father. If you knew Me, you would know My Father also."

20 These words were spoken by Jesus in the treasury, while teaching in the temple. No one arrested Him, for His time had not yet come.

Jesus Announces His Departure

21 Once more He spoke to them, "I am going away and you will look for Me, but you will die in your sins. Where I am going you cannot come." [22]"So?" said the Jews. "Is he going to kill himself, since he says, 'Where I am going you cannot come?' "

23 He answered them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. [24]That is why I said that you will die in your sins, for if you do not believe that I am the Christ, death will overtake you in your sins."

25 "You!" they said to Him, "Who do you think you are?" Jesus answered, "I am what I told you from the beginning. [26]I have much to say and judge about you. But He who sent Me is faithful, and the things that I have heard from Him I will tell the world."

27 They did not understand that He was speaking to them of the Father. [28]Therefore Jesus added, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself, but speak these things as My Father has directed Me. [29]He who sent Me is with Me still. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do what is pleasing to Him." [30]When He had spoken these words, many came to believe on Him. [31]Jesus then said to the Jews who believed on Him, "If you hold fast to My Word, then you will be truly My disciples. [32]And you will get to know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Freedom vs. Slavery

33 "We are the children of Abraham," the hecklers replied, "and have never been in slavery to anyone. What do you mean by saying, 'You will be free'?"

34 Jesus answered them, "Truly, I assure you, everyone who sins is a slave of sin. 35A slave does not remain in a household forever, but a son does. 36Therefore, if the Son should set you free, then you will be free indeed.

Whose Child Are You?

37 "I know that you are the children of Abraham, and yet you want to kill Me because there is no room for My Word in your hearts. 38I speak of what I have seen My Father do, and you do what you have seen your father do."

39 "Our father is Abraham," they answered him. Jesus said to them, "If you were the children of Abraham, you would do the works of Abraham. 40Instead, you are trying to kill Me — a Man who has told you the truth as I heard it from God. Abraham never did that. 41Yes, you are doing the works of your father."

They answered Him again, "We were not born illegitimately. God alone is our father."

42 "If God were your Father," Jesus said to them, "then you would love Me, for I came forth from God, and am come here from Him. I did not come of My own accord, but He sent Me. 43And why don't you understand what I say? Because you cannot stand to hear My Word. 44The Devil is your father, and you want to do your father's lustful desires. He was a murderer from the beginning. He did not stand by the truth, for there was no truth in him. Whenever he tells lies, he makes them up himself, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45Because I tell you the truth, you don't believe Me. 46Who among you can convict Me of sin? Why, then, don't you believe Me when I tell you the truth? 47Every child of God gives ear to His Word. You don't give ear to His Word because you are not His children."

Jesus Accused of Having an Evil Spirit

48 The Jews therefore said to Him, "Aren't we right in
saying that you are a Samaritan, and that you have an evil
spirit?" 49"No," said Jesus, "I do not have an evil spirit.
I honor My Father, but you dishonor Me. 50I am not seek-
ing My own glory. There is One who is seeking it. He will
judge. 51Truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My Word he
will never die."

52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that you
have a devil. Abraham died, and the prophets died, but you
say, 'If any one keeps My Word, he will never die.' 53Are
you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and the
prophets died. Who do you think you are?"

54 Jesus answered, "Were I to glorify Myself, My glory
would count nothing. The One who glorifies Me is My Fa-
ther, who, you say, is your God. 55You have never come to
know Him, but I know Him, and if I said that I did not
know Him, I should be a liar like you. On the contrary, I
do know Him and I obey His Word. 56Abraham, 'your fa-
ther,' rejoiced at the thought that he would see My day.
He saw it, and was glad."

57 Then the Jews said to Him, "Why, you are not even
fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?" 58Jesus said
to them, "Yes, indeed, I tell you that before Abraham was,
I AM!"

59 At this, the Jews took up stones to throw at Him.
Jesus, however, hid Himself, and escaped from the temple.

CHAPTER 9

The Healing of the Man Born Blind

AS Jesus was going on His way, He saw a man
who had been blind from birth. 2"Teacher," said His dis-
ciples to Him, "who was it that sinned, this man or his par-

ents, that he should be born blind?" [3]Jesus replied, "Neither this man nor his parents. It was to let God's work be shown plainly in him. [4]I must work the work of Him who sent Me, while it is day. Night comes, when no man can work. [5]While I am in the world, I am the Light of the World."

6 After He had said this, He spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva and put the mud on the blind man's eyes. [7]Then He said to him, "Go, wash in the Pool of Siloam." So the man went away and washed, and he came back with sight in his eyes.

8 The neighbors and those who had known him formerly as a beggar, then asked, "Isn't this the man who sat and begged?" [9]Some said, "Surely, it is." Others said, "No, but he looks much like him." He himself said, "I am he." [10]Then they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" [11]He answered, "A Man called Jesus made mud and spread it on my eyes. Then He said to me, 'Go to Siloam, and wash.' And I went and washed, and received my sight." [12]"Where is He?" they asked. He answered, "I don't know."

The Pharisees Question Him

13 They brought the formerly blind man to the Pharisees. [14]Now, it was on a sabbath that Jesus had made mud and opened his eyes. [15]The Pharisees inquired of him once more how he had gotten his sight. He told them, "He put mud on my eyes, and I washed, and I see!" [16]Some of the Pharisees then said, "This man is not from God, for he does not keep the sabbath." Others argued, "How can a sinful man do such great miracles?" There was thus a disagreement among them. [17]And they spoke again to the blind man, and asked, "What do you say about him, seeing that he opened your eyes?" He answered, "He is a Prophet."

18 The Jews did not believe that he had been blind and that he had gotten his sight, till they called in the parents of the man whose eyes had been opened. [19]"Is this your son," they asked them, "the one you say was born blind?

How is it that now he can see?" [20]His parents said, "Yes, we know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. [21]But we do not know how he now sees, nor do we know who opened his eyes. He himself is of age; ask him. He will tell his own story." [22]Such was the answer of the parents, because they were afraid of the Jews. For the Jews had agreed among themselves that should anyone acknowledge Him as the Christ, he would be expelled from the synagogue. [23]That is why the parents said, "He is of age; ask him."

24 So they again summoned the man who had been blind and said to him, "Give God the praise! We know that this man is a sinner." [25]He answered them, "I do not know that He is a sinner. One thing I do know, that I was once blind but now I see." [26]Once more they questioned him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" [27]"I have already told you that," said he, "but you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Is it because you also want to become His disciples?"

28 Then they abused him and said, "You are his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. [29]We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we do not know where he is from." [30]The man answered, "Why, how strange that you do not know where He is from, and yet He gave me the use of my eyes! [31]We know that God does not hear sinners, but if a man is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him. [32]In all the years since the world began no one has ever heard of anyone opening the eyes of one born blind. [33]Unless this Man were from God, He could do nothing."

34 They shouted back at him, "You are altogether depraved, and you have the face to teach us?" And they threw him out.

Jesus Rebukes the Pharisees

35 Jesus, having heard that they had thrown the man out, went and found him and said, "Do you believe on the Son of Man?" [36]He answered, "Who is He, Sir? Tell me, so that

I can believe on Him." [37]Jesus said to him, "You have seen Him. It is He who is speaking to you." [38]"I believe, Lord," he said, and then he kneeled before Him. [39]And Jesus said, "I came into the world to bring judgment, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become blind." [40]Some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard Him say this, and they said to Him, "Perhaps we, too, are blind?" [41]"If you were blind," answered Jesus, "you would have no sin. But, since you say, 'We see,' your sins remain."

CHAPTER 10

The Shepherd and the Sheepfold

"I TELL you truly, that the man who does not enter the sheepfold through the door, but climbs up some other way, is a thief and a robber. [2]The shepherd of the sheep enters by the door. [3]The doorkeeper opens the door for him and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. [4]When he has brought them all out, he walks on before them and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. [5]They will not follow a stranger at all. Rather, they will run away from him, for they do not know the voice of the stranger." [6]This parable Jesus spoke to them, yet they did not understand what He meant.

Jesus the Door

7 Jesus then spoke to them again, "Indeed, I tell you, I am the Door of the sheep. [8]They were all thieves and robbers who came before Me, and the sheep would not hear them. [9]I am the Door. Everyone who comes in through Me will be safe, and he will come in and go out and find pasture. [10]The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I come so that they may have life, and have an abundance of it.

Jesus' Discourse on the Good Shepherd

11 "I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays
down His life for the sheep. [12]A hireling — that is, one who
is not a shepherd and who does not own the sheep — leaves
the sheep and flees when he sees the wolf coming, and the
wolf pounces down on the sheep and scatters them. [13]The
reason why the hireling flees is that he is a hireling, and does
not care for the sheep.

14 "I am the Good Shepherd. I know My sheep, and
My sheep know Me, [15]even as the Father knows Me and I
know My Father. I lay down My life for the sheep. [16]I have
other sheep, too, which are not of this fold. I must bring
them also, and they will listen to My voice, so there will be
one flock and one Shepherd.

17 "My Father loves Me on this account, that I lay down
My life so that I may take it up again. [18]No one takes it
from Me. I am giving it Myself. Indeed, I am authorized to
lay it down, and I am authorized to take it back again. This
authority I received from My Father."

19 Because of these sayings, a difference of opinion arose
among the Jews. [20]Many of them said, "He has a devil, and
is crazy. Why listen to him?" [21]Others said, "No, these are
not the words of a madman. And a devil cannot open the
eyes of the blind, can he?"

Jesus Asserts His Deity

22 Then, in the winter time, came the Feast of Dedication
at Jerusalem. [23]Jesus was there, walking about on Solomon's
Porch in the temple. [24]The Jews gathered about Him and
said to Him, "How long will you keep our minds in sus-
pense? If you are the Christ, tell us so openly."

25 Jesus answered them, "I have told you, yet you will
not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name bear
witness for Me. [26]But, as for you, you do not believe be-
cause you are not My sheep, as I have told you. [27]My sheep
listen to My voice and I know them, and they follow Me.

28And I give them everlasting life. They shall never, never die, nor shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. 29My Father who gave them to Me is greater than all, and no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand. 30I and the Father are One!"

Jesus' Defense Before the Mob

31 Then the Jews once more took up stones to throw at Him. 32Jesus answered them, "Many a good deed have I shown you from My Father. For which are you going to stone Me?" 33They said, "We are not going to stone you for any good work, but for blasphemy, because you, a man, make yourself God." 34Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, you are gods'? (*Ex.* 22:28; *Ps.* 82:6). 35So God calls them gods to whom He spoke, and the Scripture cannot be set aside. 36Do you then accuse of blasphemy Him whom the Father has consecrated and sent into the world, because He said, 'I am the Son of God'? 37If I am not doing the works of My Father, then do not believe Me. 38But if I am doing them, then believe the works even if you don't believe Me. You will thus understand and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him." 39They tried again to seize Him, but He escaped from their hands.

Jesus Crosses the Jordan

40 Jesus went away to the farther side of Jordan, to the place where John at first had been baptizing, and there He stayed. 41Many came to Him there and they said, "John worked no miracle, but whatever John said about this Man was true." 42And many there came to believe on Him.

CHAPTER 11

The Illness of Lazarus

A certain man, Lazarus, lay ill at Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. 2This was the Mary

who had anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped His feet with her hair. It was her brother Lazarus who was sick. [3]Accordingly, the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Alas, Lord, he whom You love is ill!" [4]But Jesus, on hearing it, said, "This illness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, so that through it the Son of God may be glorified."

Jesus Announces Lazarus' Death

5 Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. [6]Yet, though He had heard that Lazarus was ill, He nevertheless stayed on at the same place two days longer. [7]Then, afterward, He said to His disciples, "Let us go up to Judea again." [8]"But, Teacher," the disciples said to Him, "the Jews were just now seeking to kill You, and are You going up there again?" [9]"Yes," said Jesus, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? Then, if one walks during the day he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. [10]But if one walks about in the night he will stumble because the light is not with him."

11 When He had said this, He added, "Lazarus, our dear friend, has fallen asleep, but I will go and awaken him." [12]"If he has fallen asleep," said the disciples to Him, "he will get well!" [13]But Jesus had spoken of his death, although they thought He spoke of resting in sleep. [14]So Jesus told them outright, "Lazarus is dead. [15]And for your sakes, I am glad that I was not there so that you may believe. Come, let us go to him."

16 Whereupon Thomas, named Didymus, the twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us go, too, so that we may die with Him."

The Promise of the Resurrection

17 On His arrival Jesus found that Lazarus had already been four days in the tomb. [18]Bethany was near Jerusalem, not quite two miles distant. [19]And a considerable number of Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother.

20 When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went
to meet Him, but Mary sat at home. [21]Martha said to Jesus,
"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have
died. [22]But still I know that whatever You may ask of God,
He will give You." [23]Jesus said to her, "Your brother will
rise again." [24]"I know," said Martha to Him, "that he will
rise again at the resurrection on the last day."

25 Jesus said to her, "I am the Resurrection and the
Life. He who believes on Me shall live, even if he dies. [26]And
everyone who lives and believes on Me shall never die in
eternity. Do you believe this?" [27]"Yes, Lord," she said to
Him, "I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of
God, who has come into the world."

The Raising of Lazarus

28 When she had said this, she went and called her sister
Mary aside, saying, "The Teacher is here, and has sent for
you." [29]On hearing this, she got up quickly and went to Him.
[30]However, Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was
still at the spot where Martha had met Him.

31 When the Jews who had been in the house with her
to console her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they
followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep
there." [32]But Mary went to the place where Jesus was and,
when she saw Him, she fell at His feet and said to Him,
"Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have
died."

33 When Jesus saw her in tears, and the Jews who came
with her also weeping, He was sad at heart and disturbed.
[34]He asked, "Where have you laid him?" They answered,
"Lord, come and see." [35]Jesus wept. [36]"See," cried the
Jews, "how much He loved him!" [37]But some remarked,
"Could not He who opened the blind man's eyes have kept
this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, again showing great distress, came to the
tomb. [39]"Take away the stone," said Jesus. Martha, the dead
man's sister, said to Him, "Lord, there is already an odor,

for it is four days . . ." [40]Jesus said to her, "Have I not said to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" [41]They then removed the stone.

And Jesus, lifting His eyes heavenward, prayed, "Father, I thank You for hearing Me. [42]I know that You always hear Me. But I have spoken for the sake of the crowd that is standing around, so that they may believe that You have sent Me."

43 And when He had said this, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" [44]And the man who had been dead came out, bound hand and foot in grave clothes, and his face was covered with a handkerchief. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him and let him go!"

The Pharisees Plot to Kill Jesus

45 Many of the Jews who had come to visit Mary and had seen what He had done, then believed on Him. [46]But some of them went to the Pharisees and told about Jesus' actions. [47]Therefore, the Sanhedrin, or Great Council, was called together by the chief priests and the Pharisees, who said, "What shall we do? For this fellow is doing many miracles. [48]If we let Him keep on in this way everyone will believe on Him, and the Romans will come and take away from us both land and people." [49]But Caiaphas, high priest that year, said to them, "You don't know anything about it. [50]Can't you see that it is better that one man should die for the people than that the whole nation should perish?"

51 He did not say this of himself but, being high priest that year, he spoke as a prophet, that Jesus must die for the nation. [52]And not only for the nation, but for the gathering together into one body all the far-scattered children of God.

53 So from that day they plotted in what way they might kill Him. [54]For this reason Jesus did not move about openly among the Jews, but went away into the country bordering on the desert, to a town called Ephraim, and there He stayed with His disciples.

55 The Jewish Passover was again at hand and many people from the countryside came up to Jerusalem to purify themselves before the Passover. 56Naturally, they looked around for Jesus and, as they were standing together in the temple, they asked one another, "What do you think? Will he come to the festival?" 57Now, both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that, if anyone should know of His whereabouts, he should make it known, so that they might arrest Him.

CHAPTER 12

Mary Anoints Jesus' Feet

THEN, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany. Here Lazarus lived, the man who had died and who was raised from the dead by Jesus. 2They made a dinner for him there, at which Martha served, and Lazarus was among the guests seated at the table with Him.

3 Then Mary, taking a pound of pure oil of spikenard, very costly, bathed Jesus' feet and wiped them with her hair, while the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

4 Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples — the one who was about to betray Him — then said, 5"Why wasn't this oil sold for fifty dollars and the money given to the poor?" 6He said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief; for, having charge of the money-box, he would take what was put into it. 7Jesus therefore said, "Let her alone. She has kept it for the day of My burial. 8The poor you have with you always, but you will not always have Me."

The Jewish Plot Against Lazarus

9 A great crowd of Jews, knowing that He was there, flocked to the place, not merely to see Jesus but also to see Lazarus whom He had raised from the dead. 10So, then, the chief priests laid plans to have Lazarus killed also. 11The reason was that because of him many of the Jews had left them and believed on Jesus.

The Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem

12 The next day a great crowd of those who were there
for the festival heard that Jesus was coming into Jerusalem.
13They took branches of palm trees and went out to meet
Him, while crying, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in
the name of the Lord — the King of Israel!" 14Then Jesus,
having found a young donkey, seated Himself upon it, as it is
written, 15"Daughter of Zion, be not afraid. See, your King
comes — seated on the colt of an ass!" (*Zech.* 9:9). 16What
this meant was not at all clear to the disciples at first, but after
Jesus had been glorified they recollected that this was written
about Him, and that they had done this for Him.

17 The people who had been with Him when He had
called Lazarus from the tomb and raised him from the
dead, were also giving testimony. 18This was also why the
crowd had met Him, because they had heard that He had
worked that miracle. 19The Pharisees therefore said to one
another, "Do you realize that we are not getting anywhere?
Why, the whole world is running after him."

Greeks Wish to See Jesus

20 Now, there were some Greeks among those who had
come up to worship at the festival. 21They came to Philip,
who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and said to him, "Sir,
we wish to see Jesus." 22Philip went and told Andrew, and
then Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

The Solemn Law of Life

23 Jesus answered them, saying, "The time is at hand for
the Son of Man to be glorified. 24Most solemnly I tell you,
unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it is
and will be only a grain of wheat; but, if it dies it will bear
much fruit. 25He who loves his life shall lose it, but he who
hates his life in this world shall keep it forever and ever.
26If anyone serves Me he must follow Me, because wher-
ever I am My servant must be. And, if anyone becomes My
servant, My Father will give him honor.

27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say?
'Father, save Me from this hour'? No! It was for this pur-
pose that I came to this hour. 28Father, glorify Your name!"

God Speaks

There came a Voice out of heaven, proclaiming, "I have
glorified it, and I will glorify it again!" 29When they heard
the Voice, some in the crowd who stood there said, "It
has thundered." Others said, "An angel spoke to Him."
30But Jesus said, "The Voice came not for My sake, but for
yours."

Jesus Prophesies His Crucifixion

31 "Now judgment is passed on this world. Now shall
the prince of this world be cast out. 32And if I am lifted up
from the earth, I will draw all men to Me." 33This He said,
indicating the sort of death He was about to die.

34 The crowd answered Him, "From the Law we have
learned that the Christ is to stay for ever. What do you mean
by saying that 'the Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this
Son of Man?"

35 Jesus therefore said to them, "The Light will be with
you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the Light,
else darkness may overtake you. When one is walking in
the dark he doesn't know where he is going. 36Believe in the
Light while you have the Light, so that you may become sons
of Light." Having spoken thus, Jesus went away and was
hidden from them.

The Unbelief of the People

37 But, even though He had worked many miracles be-
fore them, they did not believe on Him. 38This was in ful-
fillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah when he said,
"Lord, has anyone believed our report? And has the arm
of the Lord been revealed to anyone?" 39The reason why
they could not believe is stated again by Isaiah in these

words: [40]"He has blinded their eyes and has hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes and understand with their hearts, and lest they should repent and I should heal them" (*Isaiah* 6:9, 10). [41]Thus spoke Isaiah when he saw His glory, and spoke of Him.

42 Even among the rulers there were many who believed on Him, but on account of the Pharisees they did not declare their faith lest they be put out of the synagogue. [43]For they valued their reputation among men more than the approval of God.

Jesus His Father's Spokesman

44 Then Jesus declared aloud, "Whoever believes on Me, believes not only on Me but on Him who sent Me. [45]And whoever sees Me, sees Him who sent Me. [46]I have come into the world to be a Light, so that whoever believes on Me shall not remain in the dark. [47]If anyone hears My Words but does not believe them, I do not judge him, for I did not come to judge the world, but rather to save it. [48]Whoever rejects Me and does not accept My teachings is not without a judge. The Word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. [49]For I have not spoken on My own authority; on the contrary, the Father who sent Me has told Me what to say and what to preach. [50]And I know that His commandment is life everlasting. Whatever I say, therefore, I say just as the Father has given it to Me."

CHAPTER 13

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

IT was now nearing the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the time had come for Him to go from this world to the Father. He had loved His own who were in the world, and He loved them to the end. [2]So, at supper, the Devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's

son, to betray Him. [3]Jesus, knowing that the Father had put everything into His hands and that He had come from God and was going back to God, [4]got up from supper, laid aside His gown, took a cloth, and fastened it around Him. [5]Next, He poured water into a washbasin and began to wash the feet of His disciples, wiping them with the cloth He had tied around Him.

Peter's Protest

6 Finally He came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, "Lord, are You going to wash my feet?" [7]Jesus said to him, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but later on you will know." [8]"I will never let You wash my feet," said Peter to Him, "No, never!" Jesus answered him, "Unless I wash you, you will have no fellowship with Me." [9]"Lord," said Simon Peter to Him, "not only my feet, but my hands and head also." [10]Jesus said to him, "He that is washed needs only to have his feet washed to be completely clean. And now you are clean — but not every one of you." [11]For He knew who was to betray Him. That is why He said, "Not all of you are clean."

Jesus Explains the Meaning of the Act

12 When He had washed their feet and put on His gown, He sat down again. "Do you understand," He asked them, "what I have done to you? [13]You call Me Teacher and Lord. You are right, for I am all of that. [14]Well, if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, then you, too, should wash one another's feet. [15]For I have set you an example, and you should do as I do to you. [16]I tell you truly, a servant is not greater than his Master, nor is a messenger greater than He who sent him. [17]If you know this you will be blessed, if you do it.

18 "I am not speaking about all of you. I know the men I have chosen, but that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me'

(*Psalm* 41:9). [19]I tell you this now before it comes to pass, so that, after it has taken place, you may believe that I am He. [20]Most truly I say to you, whoever receives those whom I send receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Jesus Foretells His Betrayal

21 When Jesus had said this, He was disturbed in spirit, and He testified, saying, "Truly, I say to you that one of you is going to betray Me."

22 The disciples then began to look at one another, in doubt as to whom He had meant. [23]One of His disciples, the one whom Jesus loved, was reclining close to Jesus. [24]Simon Peter beckoned to him to ask Him to tell of whom it was He had spoken. [25]So, leaning back close to Jesus, he whispered, "Who is it, Lord?" [26]Jesus answered, "It is the one to whom I give this piece of bread, after having dipped it." Then, dipping the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, Simon's son. [27]And after Judas had eaten the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are about to do."

28 But no one at the supper understood what He had said to him. [29]Some supposed that, since Judas had charge of the money box, Jesus had said to him, "Buy what we need for the festival," or that he should give something to the poor. [30]As soon as Judas had received the piece of bread, he went out into the night.

The Law of Love

31 When he had gone out, Jesus said, "The Son of Man has now been glorified, and God has been glorified in Him. [32]If God has been glorified in Him, God shall also glorify Him in Himself, and He shall glorify Him at once. [33]Little children, I shall be with you only a little while. You will look for Me but, as I said to the Jews, so now I say the same to you, Where I am going, you cannot come! [34]I give

you a new commandment, that you love one another; that you should love one another as I have loved you. 35By this token will all men know that you are My disciples — that you love one another."

Jesus Foretells Peter's Denial

36 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot now follow Me, but later you will follow Me." 37"Lord," said Peter to Him, "why can't I follow You now? I will lay down my life for You." 38Jesus answered him, "You will lay down your life for Me? Listen, I tell you solemnly, the rooster will not crow until you have disowned Me three times!"

CHAPTER 14

Jesus Foretells His Return

"DON'T let your heart be troubled. You believe in God, so believe also in Me. 2There are many rooms in My Father's house. Otherwise I would have told you. I am going to make ready a place for you. 3And when I have gone away and have prepared a place, I shall come back to take you to Myself, so that you may be where I am. 4And where I am going, you know the Way."

5 Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we don't know where You are going. So how can we know the way?" 6Jesus answered, "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through Me. 7If you had known Me you would also know the Father. Indeed, from now on, you do know Him and have seen Him."

The Unity of Jesus and the Father

8 Then Philip said to Him, "Show us the Father, Lord, and we shall be satisfied." 9Jesus said to him, "Have I been so long among you, Philip, and yet you do not know Me?

Whoever has seen Me has seen the Father. Then, how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10]Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? What I say to you, I do not say from Myself. The Father who dwells in Me does the work.

11 "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me. Or else, believe Me because of the works themselves. [12]Indeed, I speak truly, He who believes on Me will do the very things I am doing; and he will do even greater things, because I am going to My Father. [13]And whatever you may ask in My name, I will do it so that the Father may have glory in the Son. [14]Yes, I will grant whatever you may ask in My name."

The Promise of the Holy Spirit

15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. [16]Then I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Comforter to be with you forever. [17]He is the Spirit of Truth whom the world cannot receive, for it does not see Him nor know Him, but you know Him, for He is ever with you and will be in you.

18 "I will not leave you fatherless. I will come to you. [19]Yet a little while and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me, for I live and you shall live. [20]On that day you will understand that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. [21]Whoever has My commandments and keeps them, he is the one who loves Me. And whoever loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will show Myself to him."

22 Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said to Him, "How is it that You will show Yourself to us and not to the world?" [23]Jesus answered, "If anyone loves Me he will keep My commandments, and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. [24]If one does not love, he does not keep My Word; and the Word you are now listening to is not My Word but that of My Father who sent Me.

25 "All this I have told you while I am still with you.
26But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit whom the Father is
going to send in My name, will teach you everything and will
remind you of everything that I have said to you.

The Peace of the Saviour

27 "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give
it to you, but not as the world gives. So don't let your
heart be troubled. Don't be afraid. 28You have heard Me
say that I am going away, but that I am coming back to
you. If you love Me, you should be glad that I am going to
the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29And now I
have told you this before it comes to pass, so that when it
does come you may believe.

30 "After this, I shall not say much to you, for the prince
of this world is coming; but he has no claim on Me. 31But
this has come about so that the world may know that I love
the Father, and that I do as He has commanded Me. Come,
let us be going."

CHAPTER 15

The Believer's Relationship to the Lord

"I AM the Vine, and My Father is the Vine-
dresser. 2He takes away every branch in Me that does not
bear fruit; and every one that bears fruit He prunes, so that
it may bear still more. 3You are already cleansed by means
of the Word which I have spoken to you. 4Live in Me and
I will live in you. As a branch cannot be fruitful by itself
if it is not still in the vine, so neither can you if you are
not in Me. 5I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever
lives in Me and I in him bears much fruit, but apart from
Me you cannot do anything.

6 "Unless one lives in Me, he is trimmed off like a dry
branch, to be gathered, cast into the fire and burned. 7But

if you live in Me and My Words in you, then ask whatever you will and it shall be done for you.

8 "When you bear much fruit — that is, when you are My disciples — then My Father gets the glory. 9Just as the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Continue in My love. 10If you keep My commandments you will remain in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love. 11I have told you this so that My joy may be yours, and your joy may be complete.

The Believer's Relationship to Fellow-Believers

12 "This is My commandment: Love one another, just as I have loved you. 13Greater love has no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. 14You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15I no longer call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is about. But I have called you friends, for I have told you everything that I heard from My Father. 16You did not choose Me. I chose you. And I have appointed you to go out and to bear fruit — fruit that will be lasting — so that the Father may give you everything that you may ask for in My name. 17"So this is My command to you: Love one another.

The Believer's Relationship to the World

18 "If the world hates you, remember that it hated Me before it hated you. 19If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own. But because you are not of the world, the world hates you. 20Remember that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also. If they had kept My Word, they would also keep yours. 21And all this they will do to you on My account, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty; but now they have no excuse for their sin. 23Whoever hates Me also hates My Father. 24If I had

not done works among them such as no one else has done, they would not have been guilty; but now, though they have seen Me, they hate both Me and My Father. [25]Thus the saying in their Law, 'They hated Me without cause,' had to be fulfilled.

The Source of the Believer's Power

26 "When the Comforter comes, whom I will send from the Father, the Spirit of Truth who goes forth from the Father will bear witness concerning Me. [27]And also you will be witnesses, for you have been with Me from the beginning.

CHAPTER 16

Jesus Warns the Disciples of Persecution

"I HAVE told you these things so that you will not be taken unawares. [2]For they will put you out of the synagogue. Indeed, the time will come when anyone who kills you will suppose that he is serving God. [3]All this they will do to you because they know neither the Father nor Me.

4 "I have told you these things so that when the time comes you may remember that I forewarned you. I did not, however, tell you this at first, because I was still with you. [5]But now I am going to Him who sent Me, yet none of you asks Me where I am going.

The Three-fold Work of the Holy Spirit

6 "Your hearts are full of sorrow because I have told you these things. [7]I assure you that it is for your good that I go away. For if I do not go, the Comforter will not come to you. But if I go, I will send Him to you. [8]And when He comes, He will convince the world as to sin, righteousness, and judgment. [9]As to sin, because they do not believe on Me. [10]As to righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will see Me no more. [11]As to judgment, because the prince of the world has been convicted.

New Truth to Be Revealed by the Holy Spirit

12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you are
not strong enough to hear them now. 13But when the Spirit
of Truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. He
will speak, not from Himself, but as He is told, and He will
make known to you the things to come. 14He will glorify
Me, for He will take of what is Mine and reveal it to you.
15Whatever the Father has is Mine. Therefore I said, 'He
will take of what is Mine and reveal it to you.'

Jesus Again Foretells His Death

16 "In a little while you will not see Me, and then in a
little while you will see Me again." 17Then some of His dis-
ciples said to one another, "What can He mean when He
says, 'In a little while you will not see Me, and then in a
little while you will see Me again,' and, 'I go to the Father'?
18So they said, "What is this that He says, 'In a little while'?
We do not understand what He means."

19 Jesus knew what they wanted to ask Him, so He said
to them, "Are you discussing among yourselves why I said,
'In a little while you will not see Me, and then in a little
while you will see Me once more'? 20I tell you most truly that
you will weep and wail, while the world will make merry.
Yes, you will have sorrow, but your sorrow will turn into
gladness. 21A woman has sorrow when she is to have a child.
But after the child is born she no longer remembers her
pain, because of her joy that a child has come into the world.
22So, indeed, you do have grief now, but I shall see you
again, and then your hearts will be glad, and no one will
take your joy from you.

The Power of Prayer

23 "On that day you will not ask Me anything. I tell you,
surely, if you ask the Father for anything, He will give it
to you in My name. 24So far you have not asked for anything
in My name. But ask, and you will receive, so that your joy
may be complete.

25 "I have told these things in figurative speech. The time is coming when I shall no longer use figures of speech, but shall talk about My Father in plain words. 26On that day you will ask in My name, and I shall not have to ask the Father in your behalf, 27for the Father loves you because you love Me and believe that I came from God.

Jesus Speaks of His Coming Departure

28 "I went out from the Father and came into the world. I am going to leave the world again and go back to the Father."

29 "Now You are talking plainly," said His disciples to Him, "and not in figurative language. 30Now we are sure that You have knowledge of everything and that You do not need anyone to ask You questions. Therefore, we believe that You came from God."

31 Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? 32The hour is coming — in fact, it is already here — when you will be scattered to the winds, every man for himself, and I shall be left alone. And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with Me. 33I have told you this so that you may have peace in Me. In the world you have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world!"

CHAPTER 17

Jesus' Prayer of Intercession

— For Himself

WHEN Jesus had thus spoken, He lifted His face toward heaven and said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify Your Son, so that the Son may glorify You. 2For You gave Him authority over all mankind; yes, You gave Him everything so that He may give them everlasting life. 3And this is eternal life — to know You, the only true God,

and Jesus the Christ whom You have sent. [4]I have given
You glory here on earth; I have done the work You sent
Me to do. [5]And now, Father, glorify Me with Yourself.
Give Me the glory I had with You before the world was.

— For His Disciples

6 "I have revealed Your name to the people You have
given Me out of the world. They were Yours, but You gave
them to Me, and they have kept Your Word. [7]They now
understand that everything that You gave Me is from You.
[8]For I gave them the Word which You gave Me, and they
accepted it. They truly understand that I came from You,
and they believe that You sent Me.

9 "I am praying for them. I am not making any request
for the world, but for those whom You gave Me, for they
are Yours. [10]Everything of Mine is Yours, and Yours is
Mine. And I have been glorified in them. [11]I am not to be
in the world any longer, but these are still in the world. I
come now to You. Holy Father, keep in Your name those
whom You have given Me, so that they may be one as We
are One. [12]While I was with them in the world I kept them
safe in Your name. I kept guard over those whom You
gave Me, and not one of them was lost except the son of
perdition, in fulfillment of Scripture. [13]But now I come to
You, and I say this while in the world, that they may have
My joy fulfilled in them.

14 "I have given them Your Word. But the world hated
them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of
the world. [15]I do not ask You to take them out of the
world, but to keep them from the evil one. [16]They are not
of this world, even as I am not of the world. [17]Sanctify
them in the truth; Your Word is truth.

18 "Just as You sent Me into the world, so also I have
sent them into the world. [19]For their sakes I sanctify My-
self, so that they also may be sanctified in truth.

— For All Believers

20 "I pray not only for these, but also for those who will
believe on Me through their word. 21May they all be one,
Father, just as You are in Me and I in You, so that they
may be one in Us, in order that the world may believe that
You sent Me! 22I gave them the glory that You gave Me,
so that they may be one as We are One; 23I in them and
You in Me, so that they may be made completely one, in
order that the world may know that You have sent Me and
that You love them as You love Me.

— For Unity and Glory

24 "Father, I desire that those You gave Me may be
with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which
You gave Me, because You loved Me before the foundation
of the world. 25Righteous Father, I knew You though the
world did not, and these knew that You sent Me. 26I have
made Your name known to them, and will make it known,
so that the love that You had for Me may be in them, and
that I may be in them."

CHAPTER 18

The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus

WHEN He had said this, Jesus set out with His
disciples across the brook of the Kedron, the Ravine of
Cedars. There was a garden there, which He entered with
His disciples. 2But Judas, who was betraying Him, also knew
the spot, for Jesus and His disciples often had been there
together. 3So Judas, taking a company of soldiers and officers
sent by the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with
torches and lanterns and weapons.

4 Jesus, knowing all that was to happen to Him, went
out and asked them, "For whom are you looking?" 5"Jesus

of Nazareth," they replied. Jesus answered, "I am He." Judas, who had betrayed Him, was also with them.

6 But when He said to them, "I am He," they stepped back and fell to the ground. 7He therefore asked again, "For whom are you looking?" And again they replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." 8Jesus answered, "I told you that I am He. So, if you are looking for Me, let these men go their way." 9This was so that His previous words might be fulfilled as He had spoken, "Of those whom You gave Me, I have lost not one."

10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. The servant's name was Malchus. 11Then Jesus called out to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath! Shall I not drink the cup which the Father gave Me?"

Jesus Brought Before the High Priest

12 Then the company of soldiers, with their captain and Jewish underlings, arrested Jesus and bound Him. 13They took him first to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, the high priest for that year. 14It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that "it would be best if one man should die for the sake of the people."

Peter Denies His Lord

15 Simon Peter followed Jesus, as did also another disciple. This disciple was known to the high priest, so he went with Jesus into the high priest's court. 16But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doormaid and brought Peter inside.

17 The doormaid therefore said to Peter, "Aren't you one of this man's disciples?" He said, "I am not!" 18Now the servants had made a charcoal fire, for it was cold, and they were warming themselves. Peter, too, was standing there to warm himself.

19 The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. 20Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in the synagogue and in the temple, to which places the Jews go at all times. I have spoken nothing in secret. 21Why are you questioning Me? Ask those who have heard what I said to them. They surely know what I have said."

22 At this remark, one of the officers by His side gave Him a slap with the palm of his hand, and said, "What! Is that the way to answer the high priest?" 23"If I have said anything wrong," said Jesus, "then prove it. But if I spoke rightly, then why do you strike Me?" 24Then Annas sent Him, still bound, to Caiaphas the high priest.

25 While Simon Peter was standing there warming himself by the fire, they said to him, "But, aren't you one of his disciples?" He made denial, saying, "I am not!" 26One of the high priest's servants, a kinsman of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, said, "Didn't I see you in the garden with him?" 27Once more Peter made denial—and immediately the rooster crowed!

Jesus Before Pilate

28 Next, they marched Jesus to the governor's palace. It was still early morning. They did not enter the palace, however, so that they might eat the Passover without being defiled. 29Therefore Pilate came out to them and asked, "What have you to say against this man?" 30They answered and said to him, "If he were not an evil-doer, we would never have brought him to you."

31 Then Pilate said to them, "Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law." "No," said the Jews, "we are not permitted to put anyone to death." 32In saying this, they showed the truth of the words Jesus had used in foretelling the sort of death He was about to die.

33 Pilate then went back into his palace. He sent for Jesus and said to Him, "You, sir, are you the King of the

Jews?" [34]Jesus answered him, "Do you say this on your own, or did others tell you this about Me?" [35]"Am I a Jew?" retorted Pilate. "No, your own people and the chief priests have given you into my hands. What have you done?"

36 Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My followers would fight so that I would not be turned over to the Jews. No, My kingdom is not an earthly one." [37]"Then you are a King?" asked Pilate. "I am, as you say, a King," answered Jesus. "For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Every friend of the truth listens to My voice."

Barabbas Is Released

38 "Truth —" exclaimed Pilate — "What is truth?" With this remark Pilate went out again to the Jews and reported, "I find no guilt at all in him! [39]But you have a custom that I should set someone free at the Passover. Is it your wish that I set free the King of the Jews?" [40]"No, no!" they shouted back at him, "Not this fellow, but Barabbas!" And Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER 19

Jesus Crowned with Thorns

THEN Pilate took Jesus, and had Him flogged. [2]The soldiers, having made a crown of thorns, put it on His head and threw a purple cloak around Him. [3]And while shouting, "Long live the King of the Jews!" they struck Him blows with their hands.

Jesus Rejected by the Jewish People

4 Therefore Pilate went out to them again and said, "See, I am bringing him out to you, so that you may realize that

I find no guilt at all in him!" 5Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the man!"

6 But when the chief priests and their underlings saw Him, they raised the cry, "Crucify him! Crucify him!" "Take him yourselves," said Pilate, "and crucify him. As for me, I find him not guilty." 7"We have a law," the Jews answered him, "and by that law of ours he should be put to death, for he claims to be the Son of God!"

8 When Pilate heard them say this, he became afraid more than ever. 9Going into the palace again, he said to Jesus, "Where are you from?" But Jesus gave him no reply. 10"Why don't you speak to me?" said Pilate. "Don't you know that I have power to crucify you, and that I have power to set you free?" 11Jesus answered, "You would have no power at all over Me, unless it were given you from above. Therefore, the one who betrayed Me has the greater sin."

12 Then Pilate wanted to set Him free, but the Jews kept shouting, "If you let this fellow go, you are not a friend of Caesar! Whoever sets himself up as a king is a rebel against Caesar." 13On hearing this cry, Pilate brought Jesus out again and seated himself on the judgment seat, at a place called the Stone Pavement, which in Hebrew is called Gabbatha.

14 It was the preparation day of the Passover, and about the noon hour. Pilate said to the Jews, "Behold, your King!" 15But they shouted, "Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate said to them, "What? Shall I crucify your King?" "We have no king but Caesar!" the high priests answered. 16He therefore handed Him over to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led Him away.

The Crucifixion of Jesus Christ

17 Carrying His cross, He came to a spot named the Place of the Skull, which in Hebrew is called Golgotha.

[18]There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on either side, and Jesus in between.

19 Then Pilate wrote a caption, and put it on the cross. The sign said, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." [20]This caption was read by many of the Jews, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near to the city. The sign was written in Hebrew, and in Latin, and in Greek. [21]The Jewish high priests then said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but rather that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews.' " [22]Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

The Division of His Garments

23 Then the soldiers, when they crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, each soldier getting one part. But His tunic, which was seamless, was woven from top to bottom in one piece. [24]Therefore, they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it as to whose it should be." This was in fulfillment of the Scripture which says, "They parted My garments among them, and for My coat they cast lots" (*Psalm 22:18*). This, therefore, was what the soldiers did.

The Death of the World's Saviour

25 Standing beside the cross of Jesus were His mother, His mother's sister, the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene. [26]And when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing near, He said to His mother, "Mother, there is your son!" [27]Then He said to His disciple, "There is your mother." And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that everything had been done to fulfill the Scriptures, said, "I am thirsty." [29]A container full of vinegar was standing near. Then they filled a sponge with vinegar, fastened it to a cane, and held it up to

His mouth. [30]When Jesus had taken the vinegar, He said, "It is finished." And, bowing His head, He died.

His Bones Not Broken

31 This was Preparation Day (Eve of the Passover), and so that the bodies might not remain on the cross during the sabbath — for this sabbath was a great day — the Jews requested Pilate that the victims' legs be broken and the bodies taken away. [32]The soldiers therefore went and broke the legs, first of the one and then of the other of those who were crucified with Him. [33]But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. [34]One of the soldiers, however, pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. [35]The one who has recorded this was an eyewitness. His witness is true, so that you may believe. [36]For these things took place in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken" *(Exod. 12:46).* [37]And another Scripture which says, "They shall gaze upon Him whom they pierced" *(Zech. 12:10).*

In the Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea

38 After these events, Joseph of Arimathea, a disciple of Jesus who was such secretly because of his fear of the Jews, asked permission of Pilate to remove the body of Jesus. Pilate gave approval, and so he came and took away His body. [39]And Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus one night, also came, bringing with him about seventy-five pounds of spices, myrrh and aloes mixed. [40]Then they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen sheets, along with the spices, as is the custom among the Jews in preparing for burial.

[41]There was a garden near the place where He had been crucified, and in the garden there was a new tomb in which no one had ever yet been laid. [42]They laid Jesus there, because it was the Jewish day of preparation for the Passover, and the tomb was near by.

CHAPTER 20

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ

ON THE first day of the week, Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. [2]So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

3 Then Peter and the other disciple set out on their way to the tomb. [4]They both ran, but the other disciple outran Peter and arrived first at the tomb. [5]Stopping to look in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there but he did not go in. [6]Then Simon Peter, coming up behind him, went into the tomb and he too saw the linen cloths lying there. [7]The handkerchief, which had been on His head, was not lying with the linen cloths, but was rolled up in a place by itself. [8]Then the other disciple, who had been the first to reach the tomb, also went in and saw and believed. [9]For they did not yet understand what the Scriptures had stated that He must first rise from the dead. [10]Then the disciples went back again to their companions.

Jesus Appears to Mary Magdalene

11 But Mary stood outside the tomb weeping and, as she wept, she stooped down to take a look into the tomb. [12]She saw two angels in white sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, the one at the head and the other at the feet. [13]They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" "Because they have taken my Lord away," she answered, "and I do not know where they have laid Him."

14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus there, but had no idea that it was He. [15]Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you look-

ing?" Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, "Sir, if you have taken Him away from here, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away." [16]"Mary!" said Jesus to her. Turning, she said to Him in Hebrew, "Rabboni!" — which means, "Teacher!"

17 "Do not touch Me!" said Jesus to her, "for I have not yet ascended to My Father. But go to My brethren and say to them that I will ascend to My Father and your Father, to My God and your God!"

18 Mary Magdalene went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had said these things to her.

Jesus Appears to the Disciples; Thomas Absent

19 In the evening of that day, the first day of the week, when for fear of the Jews the doors had been shut where the disciples were gathered, Jesus came and stood among them. And He said to them, "Peace be with you!" [20]When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. The disciples, therefore, were glad to see the Lord. [21]Again, Jesus said to them, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent Me, so I also send you."

22 Then, when He had said this, He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. [23]If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven him, but if you do not forgive someone, his sins are retained."

24 But Thomas, called Didymus (twin), one of the Twelve, was not with them when Jesus had come. [25]So the other disciples said to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "I will not believe that unless I shall see the marks of the nails on His hands and put my finger into the mark of the nails, and put my hand into His side."

Jesus Appears to the Disciples; Thomas Present

26 Eight days later the disciples were again indoors, and Thomas was with them. And though the doors had been shut, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said, "Peace

be with you!" [27]And He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here and examine My hands, and reach your hand and put it into My side. Do not be a doubter, but a believer." [28]And Thomas answered and said to Him, "My Lord and my God!" [29]Jesus said to him, "You believe because you have seen Me. But blessed are those who believe though they have not seen!"

30 Jesus did many other miracles before His disciples which are not recorded in this book. [31]But these are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and, believing, you may have life in His name.

CHAPTER 21

The Miraculous Catch of Fish

AFTER this, Jesus showed Himself again to His disciples at the Sea of Tiberias. It happened in this way: [2]Simon Peter and Thomas, called Didymus (twin), and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two more of His disciples were all together. [3]"I am going fishing," said Simon Peter to them. "We will go with you," they answered him. They went and got into the boat at once. But that night they caught nothing.

4 At break of day Jesus stood on the shore. The disciples, however, did not know it was Jesus. [5]Then Jesus called out to them, "Fellows, have you anything to eat?" "No," they answered Him. [6]And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." They did so — and they were not able to pull in the net because of the great catch of fish.

7 Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" So when Peter heard it was the Lord, he put on his coat, for he was stripped, and plunged into the sea. [8]The other disciples came in with the boat, dragging the net

with the fish, for they were not far from land — only about four hundred feet.

9 When they came to land they found a charcoal fire there, and a fish lying on it, and some bread. 10Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." 11Simon Peter then sprang up and drew the net to land. It was full of fish, one hundred and fifty-three large ones! And though there were so many, the net was not torn.

12 Jesus said to them, "Come and eat." Not one of the disciples were bold enough to ask Him, "Who are You?" for they were certain it was the Lord. 13Then Jesus went and took bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise. 14This was the third time Jesus had shown Himself to His disciples after He had risen from the dead.

Jesus' Three-fold Question to Peter

15 When they had breakfasted, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, Son of John, do you love Me more than these others do?" Peter answered Him, "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You dearly." Jesus said to him, "Feed My lambs."

16 A second time Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, Son of John, do you love Me?" "Yes, Lord, You know that I love You dearly," was the reply. Jesus said to him, "Be a shepherd of My sheep."

17 A third time Jesus said to Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me dearly?" Peter was grieved because He said to him a third time, "Do you love Me?" So he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything. You must know that I love You dearly." Jesus said to him, "Feed my Sheep. 18I tell you truly, that whereas in your youth you dressed and went about wherever you wanted to, when you become old you will stretch our your hands and someone will bind you and carry you away where you do not want to go." 19This He said to foretell the kind of death by which Peter was to glorify God. Then, having spoken thus, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Jesus' Rebuke to Peter

20 As Peter turned around, he saw the disciple whom
Jesus loved following them, the one who at the supper had
leaned close to Jesus to ask, "Lord, who is it who will be-
tray You?" [21]So when Peter saw him, he said to Jesus,
"Lord, but what of him?" [22]Jesus answered, "If I want him
to wait until I come, what is that to you? Your business is
to follow Me."

23 Hence the saying went out among the brethren that
this disciple would not die. Jesus, however, had not said that
he would not die, but rather, "If I want him to wait until
I come, what is that to you?"

John States His Authorship of the Gospel

24 This is the disciple who gives his testimony about
these matters and has written this book. We know that his
testimony is true. [25]There are also many other things that
Jesus did—so many, indeed, that if every one were recorded
the world itself, I suppose, could not contain the books that
should have been written.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

IN the first book, O Theophilus, I wrote about all
the things that Jesus did and said from the beginning, [2]also up
to the day that He ascended to heaven, just after He had,
through the Holy Spirit, given the apostles their instructions.

Jesus' Post-Resurrection Ministry

3 After He had suffered death, He showed Himself alive
to them, giving many proofs. He was seen by them during
the forty days, and He talked to them about things concern-
ing the kingdom of God. [4]Now, as they were assembled to-
gether with Him, He instructed them, "Don't leave Jerusa-
lem, but wait there for the fulfillment of the promise made
by the Father, of which you have heard Me speak. [5]For
John indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized
soon, a few days from now, with the Holy Spirit."

6 Those who were present then asked Him, "Lord, are
You at this time going to restore the kingdom of Israel?"
[7]He answered, "It is not for you to know the times and sea-
sons which the Father sets by His own authority.

The Ascension of Jesus Christ

8 "But when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you will re-
ceive power, and you will then be My witnesses in Jerusalem
and in all of Judea and Samaria and to the farthest ends of
the earth." [9]When He had said this, and while they were still
looking at Him, He was taken up, and a cloud carried Him
out of their sight.

The Promise of Christ's Return

10 They were still looking intently up to heaven, watching
His departure, when suddenly two men, dressed in white,
stood beside them. [11]"You men of Galilee," they said. "Why

are you standing here looking up to heaven? This Jesus, who now was taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way that you saw Him ascend to heaven."

The Choice of Matthias

12 They returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives. This was near Jerusalem, a little over a half mile away. 13Coming in, they went up to the upper room where Peter and John, James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the brother of James were then staying. 14All these — besides the women, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and His brothers — with one mind devoted themselves to prayer and supplication.

15 At one such meeting, when one hundred twenty were assembled there, Peter stood up before them and spoke. 16"Men and brothers," he said, "Scripture had to be fulfilled, that part which the Holy Spirit had spoken long ago by the mouth of David, about Judas, who showed the way to the men who arrested Jesus. 17He had been counted as one of us, and had had his part in our work. 18Now, this man bought a field with the money paid him for his treachery. Later, having fallen down head first, he was ruptured in the middle, and all his bowels gushed out. 19This became known to all the residents of Jerusalem, so that this piece of land came to be called, in their own dialect, Akeldama, meaning Field of Blood.

20 "For thus it is written in the Book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead be desolate, and let there be no one living there,' and, 'Let another take over his position' (*Psalm* 69:25). 21It would be wise to choose one of the men who has been with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22beginning with His baptism by John to the day that He was taken up from us. Such a one should then, together with us, become a witness of His resurrection."

23 Two men were accordingly nominated: Joseph, called
Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24Next,
they offered prayer. "Lord," they said, "You who know all
hearts, show us which of these two You have chosen. 25He is
to take the place in the service and apostleship that Judas had
before he fell away and went to his own place."
26 Then they cast lots, and the lot fell on Matthias, who
thereupon was numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAPTER 2

The Descent of the Holy Spirit

ON the Day of Pentecost they were all gathered
together in one place, and of one mind. 2Then suddenly there
came a sound from heaven like the roar of a mighty wind, and
it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3Then tongues
as of fire appeared to them, and these separated and settled
down on each one of them. 4And they were all filled with the
Holy Spirit, and they began to speak in other tongues, as the
Spirit gave them utterance.
5 Now, there were pious Jews living in Jerusalem, coming
from every country in the world. 6And when this speaking was
heard, a great crowd gathered; and each one was amazed be-
cause he heard them speaking in his own language. 7So, in
amazement and wonderment, they said to one another, "But
are not all those who are talking Galileans? 8Then how is it
that each one of us can hear his own language — 9Parthians,
Medes, and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia,
Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia? 10Also from
Phrygia and Pamphylia, from Egypt and the parts of Lybia
near to Cyrene, and, in addition, visitors from Rome, both
Jews and proselytes, 11Cretans and Arabians — we hear them
all alike telling in our own native tongues the mighty wonders
of God!" 12They were all astounded and perplexed, and kept

saying: "What can it all possibly mean?" [13]But there were some who said in mockery, "They are simply drunk with new wine!"

Peter's Sermon: Joel's Prophecy Fulfilled

14 Then Peter, standing up among the Eleven, raised his voice and spoke: "Men of Judea and residents of Jerusalem, all of you take note of this. Listen to what I am going to say! [15]These men are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only nine o'clock in the morning. [16]But rather, this is something that the Prophet Joel foretold. [17]This is what God says, 'In the latter days I will pour out My Spirit upon all mankind. Then will your sons and daughters prophesy, and your young men will have visions, and your old men will dream dreams. [18]Even on your servants, men and women alike, will I pour out My Spirit in those days, and they, too, shall prophesy. [19]And I will display wonders in the heavens above, and signs on the earth beneath — blood, and fire, and clouds of smoke. [20]The sun will turn to darkness, and the moon to blood before the coming of the Day of the Lord, that great and illustrious day. [21]And, whoever will then call on the name of the Lord will be saved' (*Joel* 2:28-32).

Peter's Sermon: Jesus' Deity Proved by His Works

22 "Men of Israel, listen to me! Jesus of Nazareth was a Man made known to you by God by means of miracles, wonders and signs which God did among you by Him. All this you, yourselves, well know. [23]But He was betrayed, permitted by the counsel and foreknowledge of God, and you had wicked men seize Him and put Him to death on the cross. [24]But God raised Him up, setting Him free from the pangs of death, since death could not possibly hold Him in its power.

Peter's Sermon: Jesus' Deity Proved by His Prophecy

25 "David has said this about Him: 'I can see the Lord before Me always. He is at My right hand, so that I need not be disturbed. [26]I am therefore glad, and My tongue is joyful;

in fact, My body rests in hope. [27]For You will not leave my soul in death, nor will You let Your Holy One in the grave. [28]You have made known to Me the ways of life, and You will delight Me with the sight of Your face' (*Psalm* 16).

29 "My brothers, I can tell you plainly about the patriarch David, not only that he died but also that he was buried and that his tomb is with us to this day. [30]He was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath that from among his descendants He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne. [31]He, therefore, foresaw and spoke of the resurrection, namely, that His soul should not be left in the realm of the dead and His body was not to suffer decay. [32]Jesus is this One, and God has now raised Him up, to which fact we are all witnesses.

33 "Therefore, He has been exalted to the right hand of God and, as promised, He has received the Holy Spirit from the Father, and has poured Him out upon us as you have seen and heard. [34]No, it was not David who ascended to heaven, for he himself says, 'The Lord said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, [35]until I place Your foes as a footstool under Your feet" ' (*Psalm* 110:1). [36]Let the whole House of Israel know for certain that God has made this Jesus whom you crucified both Lord and Christ!"

Result of Peter's Sermon

37 As they listened to him their hearts were troubled, and they said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" [38]Peter answered them, "Repent and be baptized, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39]This promise is to you and to your children, and to all people everywhere, as many as the Lord our God will call."

40 He also said many other things as he testified and exhorted them, with emphasis on the plea, "Save yourself from this wicked generation!" [41]Then those who accepted his mes-

sage were baptized. Thus, about three thousand souls were added to the believers that day.

The First Church

42 They continued steadfast in the teachings of the apostles,
also in their fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in
prayer. 43And fear of God came upon every soul, for many
miracles and signs were done by the apostles. 44All the be-
lievers lived together and had all things in common. 45They
sold their property and their goods, and distributed the pro-
ceeds to all according to their special needs. 46Day after day,
they went regularly to the temple, united. Likewise, they ob-
served the breaking of bread in their homes and ate their
meals with joy and simplicity of heart. 47They praised God
and stood in favor with all the people. And every day the Lord
added to the number of those who were saved.

CHAPTER 3

The Healing of the Lame Man

ONE day Peter and John were going up to the
temple at the hour of prayer, that is, at three o'clock in the
afternoon. 2A man lame from birth, who was carried daily to
the gate of the temple called "Beautiful," was there to beg
alms from those who were going into the temple. 3When he
saw Peter and John about to enter the temple, he asked for
a gift from them, too. 4But Peter, as well as John, looked in-
tently at him and said, "Look at us!" 5He did so, expecting to
get something from them. 6But Peter said, "I don't have any
silver or gold, but I'll give you what I do have! In the name
of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk!" 7He took the
man by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately
his feet and ankle bones grew strong. 8And leaping up, he
stood and walked about, and he went into the temple with
them, walking and leaping and praising God.

9 When all the people saw him walking and praising God,
10they recognized him to be the very man who had been sitting at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, begging, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him. 11While he still clung to Peter and John, all the people in great astonishment crowded about them in what was known as Solomon's Porch.

Peter's Second Sermon

12 When Peter saw this, he addressed them. "Men of Israel," he said, "why are you surprised at this? And why do you stare at us as though we had by our own power or piety made him walk? 13The God of our fathers — the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob — has done it. Thereby He has glorified His Servant Jesus, whom you betrayed and disowned before Pilate after he had made up his mind to set Him free. 14But you disowned the Holy and Righteous One, and demanded that a murderer be set free. 15Then you went and killed the Lord of Life whom God had raised up from the dead, a fact that we have witnessed. 16This man whom you see and know was made strong through His name, through faith in His name. Indeed, it is this faith in Him that has completely restored this man before all of you.

17 "Brothers, I know that you, as well as your rulers, did it through ignorance. 18In this way God accomplished what He had foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ must suffer. 19But you must repent; you must turn to God and have your sins blotted out; then times of refreshing will come from the presence of the Lord. 20And He will send Jesus Christ, who before this was preached to you. 21True, He must remain in heaven till the time for the restoration of all things, a matter that God has told us through all His holy prophets from the beginning.

22 "Thus Moses said, 'The Lord God will raise up from among your brothers a Prophet, just as He appointed me. You must listen to Him on every matter that He speaks to

you about. 23And everyone who will not listen to that Prophet will be exterminated from among the people' (*Deut.* 18:15). 24"All the prophets who have spoken since Samuel also have foretold of these times. 25You are the heirs of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with our fathers when he said to Abraham, 'In your seed shall all the races of the earth be blessed.' 26God has raised up His servant, Jesus, and has sent Him to you first, and He will bless you, each one of you who will turn away from your wicked ways."

CHAPTER 4

Peter and John Arrested

WHILE they were still talking to the people, the priests, the Sadducees and the captain of the temple came upon them, 2angered because they had been teaching the people and preaching that Jesus had risen from the dead. 3So they arrested them and threw them into prison until the next day. It was then already evening. 4But of those who had heard the sermon, many believed, and the number of disciples increased to about five thousand men.

Peter's Address to the Sanhedrin

5 On the next day the rulers, elders and scribes came together in Jerusalem. 6Annas, the high priest, was there as well as Caiaphas, John and Alexander; in fact, all the members of the high priestly family were there. 7They placed the apostles before them and demanded to know, "By what power, or in whose name have you done this?"

8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, gave reply. "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel," he said. 9"Listen! Today we have done a good deed to a helpless man. Maybe you are questioning us as to how he was healed. 10If so, then let it be known to you and to all the people of Israel that this man now stands before you perfectly sound, made so in the name of

Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but God raised
up again from the dead. 11He is the 'Stone that you builders
rejected, which has become the chief cornerstone.' 12There is
salvation in no one else, nor is there any other name under
heaven given among men by which we can be saved."

Peter and John Released and Warned

13 They were surprised to note the boldness of Peter and
John. They could tell that they were simple men with no
schooling, so they were astonished at them. And they recog-
nized that they had been with Jesus. 14But they did not dispute
what they had said, because the man who had been healed
was standing there with them.

15 So they ordered them to leave the council, and held a
consultation with one another. 16"What shall we do with these
men?" they asked. "It is clear to every inhabitant of Jerusalem
that a remarkable miracle has been performed through them.
We cannot deny that. 17Now, to keep the news of it from
spreading farther among the people, let us warn them with
threats not to say anything to anyone again in this name."

18 So they called them in again and ordered them not to
speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. 19In answering
them, Peter and John said, "Whether it would be right for us,
before God, to listen to you rather than to God, you will have
to judge. 20But as for us, we cannot do otherwise than tell the
things that we have seen and heard."

21 They then let them go, after having added some fur-
ther threats. On account of the people, they could find no way
to punish them, because everyone was praising God for what
had taken place. 22And the man on whom this miracle of
healing had been wrought was more than forty years of age.

The Believers Again Filled With the Holy Spirit

23 As soon as the apostles were set free, they went back
to their own group and told them everything that the chief
priests and elders had said. 24On hearing their story, they lifted

up their voices to God with one accord and said, "Almighty God, You are the maker of the heavens, the earth, the sea and everything that is in them. [25]You said through the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of our father David, Your servant, 'Why did the heathen rage and plan vain things? [26]The kings of the earth took a stand, and the rulers were united against the Lord and against his Christ.' [27]How true it is that both Herod and Pontius Pilate, as well as the Gentiles and the tribes of Israel, united here against Jesus, Your holy Servant, whom You had anointed! [28]They would carry out whatever plans and purposes You had decreed should take place. [29]And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and let Your servants preach Your Word with all boldness! [30]May Your hand be stretched out to heal, and may signs and wonders be done through the name of Jesus, Your holy Servant!"

31 When their prayer was ended, the place in which they had gathered was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the Word of God with boldness.

The State of the Church in Jerusalem

32 All the believers were then of one heart and one soul, and not one of them claimed any of his own possessions as his own, but they owned everything in common. [33]With great power the apostles gave testimony concerning the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and great was the grace that rested on all of them. [34]No one among them was in want, because all who owned lands or houses sold them, and they brought the proceeds from the property sold. [35]This they laid at the feet of the apostles, after which a distribution was made to each one according to his need. [36]Among them was one Joseph, surnamed Barnabas by the apostles, a name meaning Son of Consolation. He was a Levite, and a native of Cyprus. [37]He had some land, but he sold it and laid the money at the apostles' feet.

CHAPTER 5

The Sin of Ananias and Sapphira

THERE was also another man, Ananias by name,
whose wife was called Sapphira, and he, too, sold his property. [2]With his wife's knowledge and consent, he kept back a part of the selling price and brought the remainder and laid it at the feet of the apostles. [3]But Peter said to him, "Ananias, why did you let Satan come into your heart, causing you to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back a part of the money you got from your estate? [4]Before it was sold, was it not your own? You have not lied to men, but to God."

5 On hearing these words, Ananias fell down, dead. And a great fear came upon all who heard what was said. [6]Then the younger men got up, wrapped up his body, carried him out and buried him.

7 About three hours later, his wife also came in, but she did not know what had happened in the meantime. [8]Then Peter asked her, "Tell me, was it for so much that you sold the estate?" And she replied, "Yes, that was the price." [9]Then Peter said to her, "Alas, why did you two conspire together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of those who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." [10]And immediately she fell down at his feet and died. As the young men came in they found that she was dead, so they took her out and buried her by her husband.

11 The news of this brought a great fear upon the whole church, and upon all who heard it.

The Progress of the Church

12 Many signs and wonders were being performed among the people by means of the apostles. They all gathered together regularly on Solomon's Porch. [13]None of the outsiders dared to join them, although the people esteemed them highly. [14]And so both men and women believers were added in increasing

numbers to the Lord's people. [15]They would even carry out their sick, placing them on cots and mats, so that if Peter came that way his shadow might fall on some one of them. [16]Great numbers of people streamed into Jerusalem from the neighboring towns, and they brought with them their sick ones and some who were troubled with foul demons, all of whom were healed.

The Second Persecution

17 All this aroused the high priest and his associates, particularly the party of the Sadducees, and made them furious. [18]They laid hands on the apostles and put them in the public jail. [19]Then an angel of the Lord opened the doors of the prison during the night, let them out, and spoke to them. [20]"Go," he said, "take your stand in the temple, and teach the people all about this life."

21 Following this instruction, they went into the temple at dawn, and began to teach. Meanwhile, the high priest and his party came together and convened the council, the entire Israelite senate, and then sent to the prison to have the apostles brought before them. [22]But when the officers arrived there they did not find them in the prison. They, therefore, returned and so reported. [23]"Yes," they said, "we found the prison door shut, everything securely locked, and the keepers on guard before the doors; but when we opened them, we found nobody within."

24 When the high priest, the captain of the temple and the chief priests heard this report, they were much perplexed and wondered what this might mean. [25]Then someone came and told them, "The men you put in prison are now standing in the temple and teaching the people." [26]The captain and his men then went and took them, but without violence, for they were afraid that the people might stone them.

27 And when they had brought them in, they set them before the council and the high priest questioned them. [28]"Did we not give you strict orders," he asked, "not to teach in this

name? But, see! You have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and you plan on bringing this man's blood on us."

The Apostles' Defense

29 In reply to this, Peter and the apostles said, "One must obey God rather than men. 30The God of our fathers has raised up Jesus. You killed Him by hanging Him on a cross. 31God has, with His right hand, exalted Him to be a Prince and Saviour, and to bring repentance and remission of sins to Israel. 32We are His witnesses concerning these things, and so also in the Holy Spirit whom God gives to those who obey Him."

Gamaliel's Advice

33 On hearing this, they became infuriated and planned to kill them. 34Meanwhile, a member of the council, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, who was a teacher of the law and who was held in honor by everyone, ordered that the apostles be sent out of the room for a short time. 35He then spoke to the council, saying, "Men of Israel, consider carefully what you intend to do to these men. 36Once there was a man, years ago, named Theudas. He claimed to be somebody, and a number of men, about four hundred, joined him. Well, he was put to death, and all his followers were dispersed and nothing came of it. 37After him, Judas the Galilean rose up at the time of the census, and he induced many people to follow him, but he, too, perished and his followers were scattered to the winds. 38And so in this case, my advice is to stay away from these men and to leave them alone. For if this teaching and this work be from men, it will be overthrown, 39but if it be from God you cannot overthrow it. And besides, you may even find yourselves opposing God."

The Apostles Beaten

40 Gamaliel's advice prevailed. However, they again called in the apostles and flogged them. Then they gave strict orders that they must not speak in the name of Jesus, after which

they released them. 41So they left the council, rejoicing that they had been considered worthy to suffer indignities on account of His name. 42And then every day, in the temple and in the homes, they kept on teaching about Jesus Christ and preaching the glad tidings about Him.

CHAPTER 6

The Election of Deacons

IN those days, when the number of disciples was increasing, the Greeks in the group began to complain against the Jews because their widows were overlooked in the daily administration of relief. 2Therefore the Twelve summoned a meeting of the general body of disciples and said, "It does not seem right that we should neglect the Word of God in order to serve at table. 3Brothers, will you therefore choose from among you seven men who are well spoken of and are full of the Holy Spirit, men of wisdom whom we can then put in charge of this matter. 4But we shall always devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of preaching."

5 This proposal found favor with the whole gathering. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte of Antioch. 6They set them before the apostles, who first prayed and then laid their hands on them. 7The Word of God increased and the number of disciples in Jerusalem multiplied greatly. Even a considerable number of priests accepted the faith.

Stephen Brought Before the Council

8 Stephen, a man of great faith and power, performed great miracles and signs among the people. 9But a dispute started between Stephen and some members of a synagogue called the Freedmen, together with some Cyrenians, Alexandrians, and people from Cilicia and Asia Minor. 10But they could not

match the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke. 11So they bribed men to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous things against Moses and against God." 12By this means they stirred up the people, the elders and scribes, and they rushed upon him, seized him and took him to the council. 13False witnesses were set up, who testified, "This man keeps on saying abusive things against this holy place, and against the law. 14We ourselves have heard him say, 'Jesus of Nazareth is going to destroy this place and change the customs that Moses gave us.' "

15 The men seated in the council were all staring at Stephen, and they saw that his face appeared like that of an angel.

CHAPTER 7

Stephen's Sermon Before the Council

The God of Abraham

THE high priest asked, "These charges are true, are they not?" 2But he answered, "Men, brothers and fathers, listen! When our father Abraham was in Mesopotamia, before he had moved to Haran, the God of glory already appeared to him. 3And He said to him, 'Leave this, your native land and your kinsfolk, and go to a land that I shall show you.' 4Then he departed from the land of the Chaldeans and went to Haran to live. And after his father had died, he was led to this land where you now dwell. 5Yet God did not give him any ownership in the land — no, not even a foot of ground. But He promised that the land should be his, and that it should belong to his children and children's children after him, even though as yet he had no child. 6This is what God said, 'Your posterity will be strangers in a strange land, where they will live four hundred years, will be made slaves and cruelly treated. 7But,' said God, 'I will pass judgment on the nation that holds them in bondage, after which they will be freed and will worship Me in this place.'

8 "He also gave him the covenant of circumcision, and so when he had a son, Isaac, he circumcised him on the eighth day. And so Isaac did as the father of Jacob, and Jacob to his twelve sons, the patriarchs.

The God of Jacob

9 "These brothers, because of envy against Joseph, sold him to the Egyptians. But God was with him. [10]He rescued him from all his troubles. He gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of Egypt, who appointed him governor over all Egypt and even over the king's whole household.

11 "Then a famine came upon all the land of Egypt, and Canaan also, with terrible hardships, so that our fathers could not find food. [12]But Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, so he sent our fathers there on their first errand.

13 "On their second visit, Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and Joseph's origin was made known to Pharaoh. [14]Then Joseph sent word to his father Jacob and invited him and all his relatives, numbering seventy-five souls. [15]And Jacob moved down to Egypt and died there, as did also our fathers. [16]They were brought back to Shechem, and placed in the tomb that Abraham had bought for a sum of money from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

The God of Moses

17 "When the time of the promise God had given Abraham drew near to fulfillment, the people had increased and were getting more and more numerous in Egypt. [18]Then there came to power in Egypt a king who knew nothing about Joseph. [19]He was treacherous toward our people and oppressed our fathers. He forced them to expose their infants so that they would die.

20 "At that time Moses was born, and he was beautiful in God's sight. For three months he was nursed in his father's house. [21]When he was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter adopted

him and brought him up as her own son. [22]And so Moses was trained in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he became a great man, both in words and deeds. [23]When he had reached the age of forty the idea came to him to visit his people, the sons of Israel. [24]He saw one of them being wronged, and defended the oppressed man by killing the Egyptian. [25]He supposed that his people would understand that God would give them freedom by his help, but they did not understand.

26 "On the following day he came upon some of them quarreling, and he urged them to keep the peace. He said to them, 'Sirs, you are brothers. Why do you injure each other?' [27]Then the one who was beating his neighbor pushed him aside and said, 'Who made you our ruler and judge? [28]Do you wish to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' [29]At this retort, Moses fled to Midian, where he lived as an exile and where two sons were born to him.

30 "Forty years came and went; then an angel appeared to him in the desert of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning bush. [31]On seeing this sight Moses was full of wonder. He had come up closer to examine it, when he heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him, [32]'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob.' At this, Moses began to tremble, and he did not dare to look further.

33 "Then the Lord said to him, 'Unfasten your shoes, for you are standing on holy ground. [34]I have long seen the oppression of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their groans. Now I have come down to take them out. Come now, I will send you to Egypt.'

35 "This Moses they rejected when they said, 'Who made you our ruler and judge?' This same man God made a ruler and a liberator by the hand of the angel who appeared to him in the bush. [36]Yes, this man led them out, after working miracles and signs both in the land of Egypt and in the Red Sea, as well as in the desert for forty years.

37 "This is the same Moses who said to the sons of Israel, 'The Lord will raise up from among your brothers a prophet

just as he appointed me.' [38]This is the man who was with the congregation in the wilderness and was the go-between between the angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai and our fathers. He also received the living Word of God to be handed down to us.

39 "But our fathers would not listen to him. On the contrary, they ignored him, while their hearts longed for Egypt. [40]To Aaron they said, 'Make us gods to go before us. As for this Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we have no idea as to what has happened to him.'

41 "In those days they made a golden calf, and to this idol they offered sacrifices, and then were in great glee over their own handiwork. [42]Consequently, God abandoned them and let them worship the sun, moon and stars. This is referred to in the Book of the Prophets, as follows, 'O House of Israel, was it to Me that you offered slain beasts and other sacrifices those forty years in the wilderness? [43]No, you set up the tabernacle to Moloch, and worshiped the star of your god Remphan, and you made images so as to worship them. But I will carry you away beyond Babylon' (*Amos* 5:25-27).

The Tabernacle and the Temple

44 "Our fathers had a tent of witness in the wilderness. It was made according to the model Moses had seen, and as ordered by God who had spoken to him. [45]Our fathers who in turn inherited it under Joshua took it with them when they dispossessed the tribes that God drove out before them. They used it till the time of David. [46]He found favor with God and wanted to build a tabernacle for the God of Jacob. [47]Solomon, however, was the one who built the temple for him. [48]Still, the Most High does not dwell in temples made by hands. The prophet has said as much: [49]'Heaven is my home, and the earth is my footstool. What house will you build for me?' says the Lord. Or, 'What is the place of My rest? [50]Did not My hands make all these things?' (*Isaiah* 66:1, 2).

The Rebuke to the Jews

51 "O you stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and
ears! It is you who always resist the Holy Spirit. Your fathers
did it, and so do you. 52Which of the prophets did your fa-
thers not persecute? Did they not also kill those who foretold
the coming of the Righteous One? And now you yourselves
have become His betrayers and murderers. 53You received the
law by the help of the angels, yet you have not kept it."

The Martyrdom of Stephen

54 As they listened to Stephen, they became infuriated and
gnashed their teeth at him. 55But he was filled with the Holy
Spirit and, gazing up into heaven, he saw the glory of God
and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56And he said,
"Ah, I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the
right hand of God!" 57At this, they shouted with all their might,
held their ears and all together rushed upon him. 58Then they
cast him out of the city and stoned him. The witnesses laid
down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul.
59While they were stoning Stephen, he was praying. "Lord
Jesus," he said, "receive my spirit!" 60And finally, kneeling
down, he prayed with a loud voice, "Lord, do not count this
sin against them!" When he had said this, he fell asleep.

CHAPTER 8

The Dispersion of the Jerusalem Church

SAUL approved of the stoning of Stephen. And
that very day a great persecution began against the church in
Jerusalem, the members of which, with the exception of the
apostles, were being driven into various parts of Judea and
Samaria. 2Pious men buried Stephen and they sorrowed much
over him. 3Saul, meanwhile, was persecuting the church. He
went from house to house, dragging men and women out and

committing them to prison. [4]But those who had taken flight preached the Word as they went from place to place.

The Ministry of Philip

5 Philip went down to a town in Samaria and preached Christ to them there. [6]The people there all paid attention to what Philip said, both when they listened to him and when they saw the miracles he did. [7]There were many who had unclean spirits, and these left them, crying out with a loud voice, and many suffering from paralysis and lameness were healed. [8]There was great joy in that town.

Simon the Sorcerer

9 A man by the name of Simon had previously practiced magic in that place. He had amazed the people of Samaria, both by his magic arts and his claim to be a man of note. [10]Everyone, therefore, from the least to the greatest, hung upon his words and they said, "This man is the great power of God." [11]And they thought a great deal of him because he had so long thrilled them with his skill in magic.

12 But when Philip came, telling the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they believed and were baptized, both men and women. [13]Even Simon believed and was baptized, after which he stayed by Philip faithfully, being especially interested in the remarkable signs and miracles he was continually performing.

14 When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who, [15]when they came down there, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, [16]for He had not as yet come upon any of them. They had been baptized only in the name of the Lord Jesus. [17]So they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

18 When Simon saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money. [19]He said, "Let me also have this power to give the Holy Spirit

to anyone on whom I lay my hands." [20]"May your money perish with you," said Peter to him, "for thinking that God's gift can be bought with it! [21]You have no part, no share in these things, for your heart is not right in God's sight. [22]You must repent of this sin of yours, and ask God to forgive you for having such thoughts in your heart. [23]For I see that you are poisoned with envy and are a slave of wrong-doing." [24]"Pray for me," said Simon, "that nothing you have said may come upon me." [25]Then Peter and John returned to Jerusalem, after having given earnest personal testimony and spoken the Word of the Lord, besides preaching the Gospel in many of the other Samaritan villages.

Philip and the Ethiopian

26 An angel spoke to Philip, saying, "Rise up and go south. Take the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. It runs through wasteland." [27]He rose and went. On the road was another man, an Ethiopian eunuch. He was a man of authority under Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians, at the head of her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship. [28]Now he was going back home and, sitting in his carriage, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.

29 The Spirit then said to Philip, "Go near that carriage, and keep close to it." [30]Philip hurried up to come near and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" [31]He said, "How can I, unless someone instructs me?" He then invited Philip to come up and sit by his side.

32 And this was the Scripture passage that he was reading, "Like a sheep He was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb that is dumb before its shearer, He did not open his mouth. [33]He was humiliated and deprived of the justice due Him. Who will tell the story to His generation? For His life on this earth was taken away" (*Isaiah* 53:7, 8).

34 Philip then spoke to the eunuch. He first raised the question, "Of whom is the prophet speaking — about himself

or someone else?" [35]After this beginning, Philip continued, starting with this Scripture passage, to preach the Gospel of Jesus to him.

36 As they continued down the way they came to a pool of water, at which the eunuch asked, "See, here is water! What is to hinder me from being baptized?" [37]Philip answered, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he said, "I do believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." [38]He then gave orders that the carriage be stopped. They went down to the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and Philip baptized him.

39 When they came out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away. The eunuch saw no more of him, but went on his way rejoicing. [40]As for Philip, he appeared at Azotus and then went on through all the villages as far as Caesarea, preaching the Gospel at every place.

CHAPTER 9

The Conversion of Saul

MEANWHILE Saul, still threatening to kill the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest. [2]He requested from him letters to the synagogues in Damascus, stating that if he found any followers of Christ's way, men or women, he might arrest them and bring them back to Jerusalem in chains.

3 He journeyed on until he came near to Damascus. Suddenly, a light from heaven shone around him. [4]He fell down to the ground and then heard a voice speaking to him. "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" [5]"Who are You, Lord?" he asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," the Lord answered. "It is dangerous for you to resist and rebel." [6]Trembling and astonished, he asked, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" The Lord said to him, "Rise up and go into the city and you will be told what to do."

7 His companions stood speechless, for they heard the voice but saw no one. [8]Saul then got up from the ground, but

on opening his eyes could not see anything. So, leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. [9]Then for three days he was without sight, and he abstained from food and drink.

10 There was in Damascus a disciple by the name of Ananias. The Lord appeared to him in a vision and said, "Ananias." "Yes, Lord," he replied, "I am here." [11]The Lord then said, "Rise up and go over to Straight Street to the house of Judas and ask for a man of Tarsus, Saul by name. You will find him in prayer. [12]He had a vision in which he saw a man named Ananias come to him and put his hand on him so that he might see once more."

13 But Ananias answered, "But, Lord, many have told me about this man, how many hardships he has brought upon Your saints in Jerusalem. [14]And besides, he came here with authority from the chief priests to put in chains everyone who calls on Your name." [15]Nevertheless, the Lord said to him, "Go, because this man is My chosen vessel to carry My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel. [16]Yes, he will have to suffer much for My name's sake, and that I shall make clear to him."

The Baptism of Saul

17 Accordingly, Ananias went to that house and, placing his hands on Saul, said, "Brother, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, has sent me so that you may have your sight restored and be filled with the Holy Spirit." [18]And at once something like scales fell from his eyes, and he recovered his sight instantly. Then he got up and was baptized. [19]After that, he ate some food and recovered his strength. And for some days Saul stayed in Damascus with the disciples.

Saul Preaches the Gospel

20 Saul began at once to preach in the synagogues that Christ is the Son of God. [21]And all who heard him were there-

fore astounded, and said, "Is not this the man who in Jerusalem brought death and destruction on those who called on His name? And has he not come here for the very purpose of arresting such persons and to bring them to the chief priests?" 22But Saul preached with ever increasing power and, by his proofs that Jesus was the Christ, he bewildered the Jews who lived in Damascus.

23 Quite a number of days came and went before the Jews formed a conspiracy to put Saul to death, 24but he got wind of their plot. They even stood watch at the city gates day and night, bent on killing him. 25The disciples, therefore, helped him escape by night, letting him down over the wall in a basket.

Saul Visits Jerusalem

26 When Saul came back to Jerusalem he tried to associate with the disciples there, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he was a disciple. 27Then Barnabas took charge of him. He brought him along to the apostles, told them how he had seen the Lord on the way, how the Lord had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly in Damascus in the name of Jesus. 28After that, he could go in and out freely among them in Jerusalem, and he preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. 29He spoke also to the Greek-speaking Jews (Hellenists) and argued with them, but they made plans to have him put to death. 30When the brethren learned of this, they brought Saul down to Caesarea and sent him on to Tarsus.

31 Then the congregation throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria really enjoyed peace for a time. They were being built up. They walked in the fear of the Lord and in the consolation of the Holy Spirit. They increased in membership.

The Healing of Aeneas

32 When Peter was making a visitation trip to all parts of the field, he came to the disciples living at Lydda. 33There he found a man named Aeneas who had been kept to his bed

for eight years, being paralyzed. 34Peter said to him, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ is going to heal you. Get up and make your bed!" He got up at once. 35And all the inhabitants of Lydda and Sharon saw him, and turned to the Lord.

The Raising of Dorcas

36 In Joppa there lived a disciple named Tabitha, which in Greek is translated Dorcas, meaning Gazelle. She was always busy doing good and helping the poor. 37Then one day she took sick and died. After they had washed her body, they laid her in an upper room. 38Since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was at Lydda, they sent two messengers to him, begging him not to delay but to come at once. 39Peter got ready and went with them. When they got there, they brought him to the upper room where all the widows were standing around, crying and displaying the dresses and coats Dorcas had made while she was with them.

40 Peter made them all leave the room, after which he kneeled down and prayed. Next, he turned to her body and said, "Tabitha, arise!" And she opened her eyes. Then, seeing Peter, she sat up. 41He took her hand and lifted her up, and then, having called in the saints and the widows, he presented her to them alive.

42 News of this went throughout all of Joppa and many came to believe in the Lord. 43After this, Peter stayed on in Joppa for quite a while at the home of one Simon, a tanner.

CHAPTER 10

The Vision of Cornelius

THERE was a man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, who was a captain in an Italian company of the Roman army. 2Both he and his family were pious and God-fearing. He was also generous to the poor, and prayed to God constantly.

3 One day, at about three o'clock in the afternoon, he had
a vision. He clearly saw an angel of God coming to him, and
heard him say, "Cornelius." 4He stared at him, and said, as
he was becoming fearful, "What is it, Lord?" He answered,
"Your prayers and your charities have gone up to God as a
memorial. 5Now send some men to Joppa and ask Simon,
called Peter, to come here. 6He is living with Simon the tanner,
whose house is by the seashore. He will tell you what you
ought to do."

7 When the angel who had spoken to him had left, Cor-
nelius called in two of his servants and a pious soldier who
waited on him at all times. 8After telling them what had
taken place, he sent them on to Joppa.

Peter's Vision of the Great Sheet

9 The next day they set out on their journey and about
noon they were coming near to the town. Just then Peter
went up on the housetop to pray. 10He became very hungry
and craved something to eat. But while they were making
dinner ready, he fell into a trance.

11 Then he saw the heavens opening and a vessel was com-
ing down to him, more like a big tablecloth let down to the
earth by its four corners. 12On this cloth were placed all the
four-footed animals of the earth, including wild beasts and
creeping things and birds of the air.

13 A voice came to him, saying, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat."
14"Not at all, Lord," said Peter, "for I have never eaten any-
thing prohibited or unclean." 15The voice came a second time
to him, "What God has cleansed you must not consider un-
clean." 16This was repeated three times, after which the vessel
was taken back into heaven.

Cornelius Sends Messengers to Peter

17 As he was thinking about the meaning of the vision, the
men whom Cornelius had sent came. They had first inquired
as to Simon's house, and now they were standing by the porch.

[18]They called out to ask if Simon Peter were lodging there.

19 Peter was still meditating about the vision when the Spirit said to him, "See! Three men are looking for you. [20]Get up and go down to them, and go with them. It is I who sent them, so do not have any misgivings." [21]Peter then went down to the men who had been sent to him by Cornelius and said, "I am the one you are looking for. What is your errand?" [22]They said, "We come from Cornelius. He is a captain and an upright and God-fearing man, to which the whole Jewish nation can testify. He was instructed by a holy angel to send for you, to ask you to come to his house so he may hear what you have to say."

Peter Returns With the Messengers

23 Peter then called them in and gave them lodging for the night. The next day he went back with them and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him. [24]And the day after that they arrived in Caesarea. Cornelius was expecting them and meanwhile had gathered his relatives and intimate friends at his house. [25]When Peter came in, Cornelius met him, then fell at his feet to worship him. [26]But Peter raised him up, saying, "Get up. I am just a man like yourself." [27]With these words he went into the house, where he found a great many gathered.

28 He said to them, "You know, of course, that it is against the law for a Jew to associate with one of another race, or even to visit him. But God has shown me that no man is vulgar or unclean. [29]For that reason I came without any hesitation when you sent for me. But I want to ask why you sent for me."

30 Cornelius answered, "Four days ago at this time, three o'clock in the afternoon, I was at prayer here at home when all at once I saw a man standing before me in bright apparel. [31]He said to me, 'Cornelius, God has heard your prayers and has remembered your gifts to charity. [32]You must send to Joppa and ask Simon, who is also called Peter, to come here. He is staying at the home of Simon the tanner, by the seaside.'

33So I sent for you at once and you did well in coming. And
here we are now, in God's presence, ready to hear whatever
God has told you to say."

Peter's Sermon in the House of Cornelius

34 Then Peter spoke: "Truly, God is not a respecter of
persons. That I can see. 35He is pleased with any man in any
land who fears Him and does what is right. 36Now He has sent
His Word to the sons of Israel, in which He announces the
glad tidings of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

37 "You know the story of what has happened throughout
all of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John
preached. 38You know how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth
with the Holy Spirit and with power and how He went about
doing good and healing everyone who was oppressed by the
Devil, because God was with Him. 39We are witnesses of all
that He did in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem. And
they put Him to death by hanging Him on a cross.

40 "But God raised Him up on the third day and permitted
Him to be clearly seen. 41Not everyone saw Him, but we saw
Him, having been chosen His witnesses beforehand, and we
ate and drank with Him after He had risen from the dead.
42And He gave us the commission to preach to the people, to
testify fully that He is the One whom God has appointed to
be judge of the living and the dead. 43All the prophets testify
to this, that everyone who believes in Him will have his sins
forgiven through His name."

The Household of Cornelius Filled With the Spirit

44 Even while Peter was preaching this sermon, the Holy
Spirit came upon all who were listening to his message. 45The
Jewish believers who came along with Peter were astounded
at the fact that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured
out upon the non-Jews also. 46For they heard them talking in
other tongues and praising God. 47Peter then said, "Can any-
one refuse these people baptism with water, seeing that they

have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" [48]He then gave orders that they should be baptized in the name of the Lord. This done, they begged him to stay there a while longer.

CHAPTER 11

Peter Defends His Ministry to the Gentiles

THE apostles and brethren who were in Judea learned that non-Jews also had received the word of God. [2]So when Peter went up to Jerusalem again, those who still held to the need of circumcision criticized him. [3]They said, "Why did you visit the uncircumcised and eat with them?" [4]Peter then began to relate what had happened, in consecutive order.

5 "I was in the town of Joppa, and at prayer," he said, "when a trance came upon me, in which I had a vision. It seemed that a sort of vessel was coming down. It was like a great tablecloth let down from heaven by its four corners. It stopped when it reached me. [6]I was watching carefully and thinking, as I noted what was on the sheet — quadrupeds, including the wild beasts, also creeping things and birds of the air. [7]And I heard a voice saying to me, 'Rise up, Peter, kill and eat.' [8]But I answered, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing common or unclean has ever come into my mouth.' [9]Then the voice from heaven spoke a second time, 'What God has made clean you must not call unclean.' [10]This was done three times, after which it was all withdrawn into heaven.

11 "At that very moment three men stopped at the house where I was staying, having been sent to me from Caesarea. [12]The Spirit told me to go with them without hesitation, and I went, accompanied by six brethren, and we entered the house of the man. [13]He related to us how he had seen an angel in his own home. The angel had stood before him and had said, 'Send some men to Joppa to ask for Simon Peter. [14]He will tell you how you can be saved; yes, you and your whole household.'

15 "As I began to talk to them, the Holy Spirit came down
upon them just as He had on us at the beginning. 16Then I
recalled that the Lord had said, 'John indeed baptized with
water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' 17Now,
since God gave them the same gift as He had given us for be-
lieving in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I should try
to hinder God?"

18 When they had heard his statement, they were satisfied
and praised God, saying, "So God gives life also to the Gen-
tiles through repentance!"

The New Church at Antioch

19 Of those who had fled from the persecution against
Stephen, some went up to Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch.
They preached the Word, but only to the Jews. 20There were,
however, some men of Cyprus and Cyrene who came to An-
tioch and spoke to the Greeks there, preaching the Gospel
of Jesus Christ. 21The hand of the Lord was with them, so
that a great number turned to the Lord in faith.

22 This good report came to the ears of the assembly at
Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to follow up at Antioch.
23When he came there and saw how gracious God had been
to them, he rejoiced and exhorted everyone to have a resolute
heart and to hold fast to the Lord. 24He was a good man, full
of the Holy Spirit and faith. And many people were won over
to the Lord.

25 Then Barnabas went on farther to Tarsus to find Saul.
26When he found him, he brought him back with him to An-
tioch. For a whole year they labored there in the assembly,
teaching large gatherings. It was there at Antioch that the
disciples were first called Christians.

The New Church Helps the Church at Jerusalem

27 At that time some prophets came down from Jerusalem
to Antioch. 28One of them, named Agabus, got up and, under
inspiration of the Spirit, prophesied that a severe famine

would come upon the whole inhabited earth, and this came to pass under Emperor Claudius. [29]So the disciples decided that each one should give according to his prosperity to the relief of the brethren living in Judea. [30]And this they did, sending their contribution in care of Barnabas and Saul to the elders there.

CHAPTER 12

Herod Persecutes the Apostles

AT that time King Herod used his authority to persecute members of the Church. [2]Thus he killed James, the brother of John, with a sword. [3]When he saw that this pleased the Jews, he took a next step and set out to lay hold of Peter, too. It happened during the Festival of Unleavened Bread. [4]He had him arrested and put into prison. Then he appointed four detachments of soldiers, with four in each detachment, to stand guard over him, with the idea of presenting him to the people after the Passover.

The Miraculous Deliverance of Peter

5 So Peter was in prison and well guarded. And meanwhile the Church was at prayer, making fervent intercessions to God in his behalf. [6]But the night before Herod planned to bring him out, he lay sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. Outside the doors, sentries guarded the prison.

7 Then suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared near him and a light illumined the building. The angel slapped Peter on the side to rouse him and said, "Hurry and get up!" Thereupon the chains dropped from his hands. [8]The angel spoke to him again, "Put on your belt and shoes." He did so. Once more he spoke to him, "Now put on your coat and follow me." [9]He followed him out, but he did not realize that what was taking place with the angel's help was real and not just a vision.

10 They passed first one guard, then a second guard and
reached the iron gate that leads out of the city, and that swung
wide open to them of its own accord. They passed through
this gate and, as soon as they had gone up one street, the
angel left him.

The Unbelieving Believers

11 "Now I know," said Peter to himself, "that the Lord
for a fact did send His angel to deliver me out of Herod's
hands, and from all the things that the Jewish people expected
to see." 12Then, after thinking it over, he set out for the house
of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Many were assembled at
her place, engaged in prayer.

13 After Peter had knocked at the door of the porch, a
girl named Rhoda went to answer the knock. 14She recog-
nized the voice of Peter but she did not at once open the door,
for she was so glad that she ran back in to report that Peter
was standing outside at the porch. 15"You are crazy!" they
said to her. But she insisted that it was so. 16And Peter kept
on knocking. So they opened up for him, and they were dumb-
founded!

17 Then Peter made a signal for them to remain silent,
after which he told them how the Lord had delivered him
from the prison. And he added, "Tell it to James and the
brethren." He then took his departure for another place.

The Death of Herod

18 At daybreak there was a great stir among the soldiers,
as to what had become of Peter. 19Herod set out to find him
but failed; so, after having questioned the keepers, he gave
orders to have them put to death. He then went down from
Judea to Caesarea to stay for a time.

20 There was a bitter hostility between Herod and the
people of Tyre and Sidon. But their country was dependent
on his for its supplies, so they made friends with Blastus, the
king's household steward, and approached the king in a body,

asking for peace. [21]On the appointed day, Herod, dressed in his royal robe, sat on his throne and began to make a speech to them. [22]The people started to applaud, shouting, "This is the voice of a god, not of a man!" [23]Then the angel of the Lord instantly struck him down with a deadly disease because he did not give God the glory; and he died, eaten by worms.

24 The Word of God kept growing stronger and spreading out widely. [25]When they had carried out their relief work, Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, bringing with them John Mark.

CHAPTER 13

The Call of Saul and Barnabas

IN the assembly at Antioch there were a number of prophets and teachers, such as Barnabas, Simeon Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaean (a foster brother of Herod the governor) and Saul. [2]While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set Barnabas and Saul apart for Me for the work to which I have called them."

The Beginning of Paul's First Missionary Journey

3 So, after they had fasted and prayed, they laid their hands on them and sent them out. [4]Indeed, it was really the Holy Spirit who had sent them. They went first to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus. [5]When they landed at Salamis they preached the Word of God in the Jewish synagogue there. They had taken John Mark along as their helper.

The Opposition at Paphos

6 They crossed the island as far as Paphos. There they met Barjesus, a Jewish magician and false prophet. [7]At the time he was with the governor, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence who had asked Barnabas and Saul to come to him, for he wished to hear the Word of God. [8]But this Elymas the

magician (as he called himself)— the word Elymas means magician — opposed them. He tried to keep the governor from accepting the faith.

9 Saul — hereafter called Paul — filled with the Holy Spirit, looked squarely at him [10]and said, "You professional deceiver and mischief maker, you son of the devil, you enemy of all that is right — will you never stop perverting the straight ways of the Lord? [11]Now, look here, the hand of the Lord will descend on you, and you will become blind, so that for a time you will be unable to see even the sun." And immediately mist and darkness came upon him and he had to ask people to lead him by the hand as he went from place to place.

12 But the governor believed, for he had witnessed what had happened, and he was greatly interested in the teaching of the Lord.

13 Paul and his companions then set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphilia. John Mark left them there, returning to Jerusalem.

Paul's Sermon in the Synagogue at Antioch

14 From Perga they continued on until they came to Antioch in Pisidia. When the sabbath came around they went into a synagogue and sat down. [15]After the rulers had read from the law and the prophets, they stepped down to them, saying, "Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation to give to the people, say it now." [16]Accordingly, Paul stood up, motioned with his hand and addressed them:

"Men of Israel, and you God-fearing people, listen to me: [17]The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made them a great people during their stay in the land of Egypt, and then with uplifted hand He led them out of it. [18]For about forty years He put up with their ways in the desert. [19]Then, after He had overthrown seven nations in the land of Canaan, He divided the land to them by lot. [20]After that, for about four hundred and fifty years, He let them have judges up to the time of the prophet Samuel.

21 "Next, they wanted a king, and God gave them Saul,
the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin, who reigned
forty years. 22When He had removed him, He raised up David
to be their king, to whom He gave this testimonial, 'I have
found in David, son of Jesse, a man after My own heart, who
will do all that I want him to.'

23 "It is from this man's posterity that God has, as He
promised, given Israel a Saviour, Jesus. 24Before He came,
John had prepared the way by proclaiming to all the people
of Israel a baptism of repentance. 25When John himself was
about finished with his work, he asked, 'Who do you think I
am? I am not the one, but He will come after me. And I am
not worthy even to untie the shoes on His feet.'

26 "Men and brethren, sons of the race of Abraham, and
you others who fear God, this message of salvation has been
sent to you. 27For the people of Jerusalem and their rulers,
because of their ignorance of Him and the prophecies read to
them every sabbath, fulfilled those prophecies by condemning
Him. 28They demanded of Pilate that He be put to death, al-
though they could find no charge against Him deserving death.
29Then, when they had fulfilled everything that had been
written about Him, they took Him down from the cross and
laid Him in a tomb. 30But God raised Him from the dead.
31And for many days He appeared to those who had come up
with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, and who are now His
witnesses to the people.

32 "And so we bring you the Gospel (good news) of the
promise made to the fathers. And God has fulfilled this prom-
ise to us, their children, by raising up Jesus. 33This is so stated
also in the second Psalm, 'You are my Son; I have begotten
you today.' 34And in proof of that, He raised Him from the
dead, never again to return to decay. He has said, 'I will
fulfill to you the faithful promises made to David.'

35 "And in another Psalm He says, 'You will not permit
your Holy One to undergo decay.' 36David truly served his
own generation by God's counseling, then died and was laid

to rest beside his fathers and underwent decay. [37]But He whom God raised again did not undergo decay.

38 "Men and brethren, listen to the good news: You may have forgiveness of sins through this One. [39]Everyone who believes in Him will be justified in all things, even those from which the law of Moses cannot set you free. [40]Look out, therefore, that the judgment of the prophets may not come upon you! [41]'Listen, you scoffers! You will wonder, but you will perish. I will do a work in your days, something that you will not believe at all, even if one should make it plain to you.' "

42 Then, when the Jews had left the synagogue, the Gentiles requested that he return on the following sabbath and speak again on the subject. [43]When the synagogue was dismissed, many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas, who talked to them about the importance of continuing in the grace of God.

Paul and Barnabas Turn to the Gentiles

44 On the following sabbath, almost the whole town came out to hear the Word of God. [45]The Jews were filled with envy when they saw the immense crowd that came to the meeting, and they interrupted Paul's address with contradictions and blasphemies. [46]Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly, "We had to preach the Word of God to you first, but you thrust it away from you, thus declaring yourselves unworthy of everlasting life; hence, we turn to the Gentiles. [47]The Lord gave us a commission. It is this: 'You are to be a light to the Gentiles and to bring salvation to the farthest parts of the earth' " (*Isaiah* 49:6).

48 The Gentiles, on hearing this, were very glad and praised the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to everlasting life believed. [49]And the Word of the Lord spread throughout all that region.

50 The Jews, however, by stirring up the principal men and the most religious and respected women of the city, started persecution against Paul and Barnabas and drove them out of

town. [51]After having shaken the dust off their feet in protest against them, they came to Iconium. [52]The apostles were in joyful spirit and filled with the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER 14

The Threats at Iconium

AT Iconium they again went together into a Jewish synagogue and preached in such a way that a large number believed, both of Jews and Greeks. [2]At this, the unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles and poisoned their minds against the disciples. [3]Nevertheless, they remained there quite a while and preached with boldness, trusting in the Lord. He gave His approval to the preaching of His grace by letting both signs and miracles be done by them. [4]The people of the city were divided in opinion, some siding with the Jews and some with the apostles. [5]Finally, there was an attempt on the part of both the Gentiles and the Jews, together with the authorities, to insult and stone them.

The Healing of the Cripple at Lystra

6 When they became aware of this danger they fled to Lystra and Derbe, also towns of Lycaonia, and to the neighboring countryside. [7]And there, too, they preached the Gospel. [8]In Lystra there sat a lame man, a cripple from birth, who had never walked. [9]This man listened as Paul was speaking. Paul was watching him and saw that he believed that he could be healed. [10]So Paul spoke to him in a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet!" And he sprang up and walked.

Paul and Barnabas Hailed As Gods, Then Stoned

11 When the crowds saw what Paul did, they shouted in their Lycaonian dialect, "It is the gods! They have come down to us in the likeness of men." [12]And Barnabas they called Zeus (Jupiter), while Paul was named Hermes (Mercury),

because he was the chief speaker. 13Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple stood at the entrance of the city, came together with crowds of people bringing oxen and wreaths, wishing to sacrifice to them.

14 When Paul and Barnabas, the apostles, discovered what was going on, they rushed into the crowd, tearing their clothing and crying out, 15"Why are you doing this? We are simply men with the same kind of feelings as you have. We preach the glad tidings that you should turn away from such superstitions to the living God who made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them. 16In bygone ages He permitted the Gentiles to walk in their own ways. 17Yet, even so, He has not left Himself without any witness. He has showered blessings, sending rains upon us from the skies and giving fruitful seasons, supplying us with food in plenty and our hearts with gladness."

18 Even with such arguments they could hardly stop the crowds from sacrificing to them. 19In the meantime, however, some Jews from Antioch and Iconium arrived and influenced the mob, so they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, leaving him there for dead.

They Return to Antioch

20 Paul revived and got up just as many of the disciples had gathered around him. He went back to the city, and the next day he set out with Barnabas for Derbe. 21In that city, too, they preached the Gospel and won many disciples, after which they returned by way of Lystra and Iconium and Antioch. 22In each place they strengthened the souls of the disciples and encouraged them to be true to the faith, and reminded them that to enter the kingdom of God we must suffer many hardships.

23 In every congregation they had elders appointed for them, and, with prayer and fasting, these were dedicated to the Lord on whom they believed. 24Then they went on farther and, passing through Pisidia, they came to Pamphilia. 25After

that, they preached the Word in Perga and came down to Attalia. [26]Next, they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been commissioned by the grace of God to do the work they now had completed.

27 On their arrival, they called the congregation together and gave a report of everything that God had done for them on the trip, and how He had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles. [28]Then, for quite a long time they stayed there with the disciples.

CHAPTER 15

The Council at Jerusalem

Paul, Barnabas and Others Go to Jerusalem

CERTAIN men came down from Judea and told the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to Mosaic custom, you cannot be saved." [2]Naturally, Paul and Barnabas took a leading part in the discussion and disagreement that arose, and so they and some others from among them were chosen to go up to the apostles at Jerusalem to settle the question. [3]It was, in fact, the congregation that was sending them. They passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, and as they went along they told about the conversion of the Gentiles. This made all the brethren happy.

4 When they arrived at Jerusalem they were given a welcome by the congregation and the apostles and elders there, and they related to them, too, what God had done through them.

The Question to Be Decided

5 Some of the believers there had been Pharisees, and they rose up and said, "Circumcision and keeping the law of Moses are two essentials." [6]The apostles and elders therefore called a council to look into the matter.

Peter's Plea for Christian Liberty

7 The discussion was carried on at great length. Finally,
Peter rose up and said,
"Friends, you know that already a good while ago it was
God's good pleasure to use me to preach the Gospel to the
Gentiles so that they might believe. 8And God, who knows
the heart, bore them clear witness when He gave them the
Holy Spirit even as He had done to us. 9That is, He has made
no distinction between them and us. They too had their hearts
purified by faith.
10 "I therefore ask you: Why do you want God to put a
yoke upon the neck of the disciples, one that neither our
fathers nor we were strong enough to wear? 11No; we believe
that it is by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that we are to
be saved, and they also will be saved in the same manner."
12 The whole assembly remained silent, listening to Paul
and Barnabas as they told what signs and wonders God had
worked among the Gentiles through them.

The Result: God's Call Includes the Gentiles

13 When they were through talking, James answered them,
"Men and brethren, hear what I have to say: 14Simon has
now told us how God made His first visit to the Gentiles so
as to win from the nations a people to bear His name. 15And
this agrees with the words of the prophet, when he says,
16'There will come a time when I shall return to rebuild the
fallen tabernacle of David. Yes, I shall build it again out
of its ruins; I shall restore it. 17And so the rest of mankind
may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who have been called
by My name. So says the Lord who is the doer of all this.
18God has made known all His works from eternity' (*Amos*
9:11, 12).

The Result: The Gentiles Are Not Under the Law

19 "I am therefore convinced that we should not trouble
those Gentiles who have turned to God. 20In this case we

could write to them to avoid everything that has been sacrificed to idols, also to avoid unlawful sexual intercourse, and not to eat anything strangled, or blood. [21]From ancient times the law of Moses has been read and expounded every sabbath and in every city."

22 Then it seemed good to the apostles, the elders and the whole congregation to choose some men from their midst and to send them with Paul and Barnabas. They chose Judas Barsabas and Silas, both leaders among the brethren, [23]and they sent along with them this letter:

"The apostles, elders and brethren, to the brethren from among the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia, greeting! [24]We have learned that some from our group have gone out and have caused you trouble by their claims, and have upset your minds. They have said that you must be circumcised and that you must keep the law. We gave them no such commission. [25]It has therefore seemed good to us to come together and to agree on choosing men to send to you along with our beloved Barnabas and Paul. [26]These men have hazarded their very lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. [27]The men we are sending are Judas and Silas, who will themselves confirm this message by word of mouth. [28]It has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to lay on you any other burden except what is necessary. [29]You are to avoid what has been sacrificed to idols, the eating of blood, meat from animals strangled to death, and sex impurity. If you will keep yourselves free from these things, you will do well. Farewell!"

The Apostles Return to Antioch

30 So, when they were dismissed they set out for Antioch, and as soon as they had gathered the people there they gave them the letter. [31]When the letter was read it gave them both comfort and joy. [32]Then Judas and Silas, who themselves were also prophets, preached to the brethren and strengthened their faith.

33 After they had been there for a time, the brethren dis-

missed them, in peace, to go back to the apostles. [34]But Silas felt that he should remain there. [35]Also Paul and Barnabas stayed on in Antioch. Together with many others, they taught and preached the glad tidings in the Word of God.

The Beginning of Paul's Second Missionary Journey

36 Some days later, Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us now go back and visit the brethren in every town where we have preached the Word of the Lord, and find out how they are getting along." [37]Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them. [38]But Paul did not think it wise to take him with them, for he had left them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work.

39 So sharp was the dispute between them that they parted company, and Barnabas, taking Mark with him, set sail for Cyprus. [40]Then Paul chose Silas and, after the brethren had commended him to the grace of God, he also set out. [41]His trip took him through Syria and Cilicia, where he established congregations.

CHAPTER 16

Paul Finds Timothy

PAUL came to Derbe and then to Lystra. There was a disciple there named Timothy, whose mother was a Christian Jewess, but his father was a Greek. [2]The brethren at Lystra and Iconium held him in high esteem. [3]Paul wanted him to be his companion, but first he had him circumcised because of the Jews who lived in those parts, all of whom knew that his father was a Greek.

4 As they went on their way from town to town, they encouraged the keeping of the rules adopted by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. [5]And the churches were thereby also strengthened in the faith and daily increased in membership.

The Macedonian Vision

6 In this way they journeyed on through Phrygia and the
Galatian countryside, but they were forbidden by the Holy
Spirit to preach the Word in the district called Asia. 7When
they came to Mysia they tried to go on to Bithynia, but the
Spirit of Jesus would not let them. 8Then they went right
on through Mysia till they came down to Troas.

9 That night Paul had a vision. He saw a man from
Macedonia standing there, pleading with him, "Come over
to Macedonia and help us!" 10After he had seen this vision,
we concluded that the Lord had thereby called us to preach
the Gospel to them, and we tried at once to get over to
Macedonia. 11So we left Troas, sailing straight across to
Samothracia, and the following day we went on to Neapolis.

Lydia, the First European Convert

12 From there we went on to Philippi. This was the chief
city in that part of Macedonia, and a Roman colony. We
stopped here in this city a number of days. 13On the sabbath
day, we went outside the city down by the river, where there
was a meeting place for prayer. Some women had already
come together there and we sat down and talked to them.

14 One of the women who were listening was a seller of
purple fabric, from the city of Thyatira. Her name was Lydia,
and she was already a worshiper of God. The Lord now
opened her heart so that she could pay attention to every-
thing that Paul was saying. 15When she and her family had
been baptized, she said to us urgently, "If you are con-
vinced that I am faithful to the Lord, come to my house and
stay." She induced them to do so.

The Healing of the Demoniac Girl

16 Then, one day as we were going to the place of
prayer, we met a girl who was possessed by a fortune-telling
demon. Her masters made much money by her predictions.
17She followed after Paul and the rest of us and kept on cry-

ing out, "These men are servants of the Highest God and preach the way of salvation." [18]She kept this up for many days. It bothered Paul considerably. At last he turned around and said to the demon, "In the name of Jesus Christ, I command you to come out of her!" And he came out at once.

Paul and Silas Imprisoned

19 When her masters saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the city officials. [20]They placed them before the authorities and said, "These men, who are Jews, are stirring up a lot of trouble in our city. [21]They are advocating customs which we, as Roman citizens, cannot legally accept or follow."

22 A mob that had gathered rose up against them, and the court officials ordered them stripped of their clothing and beaten with rods. [23]Then, when they had beaten them with many blows, they cast them into prison and gave the jailer orders to keep them safely. [24]Thus instructed, he put them in the inner dungeon and fastened their feet in stocks.

The Conversion of the Philippian Jailer

25 Towards midnight, Paul and Silas were engaged in praying and singing praises to God, while the other prisoners were listening to them. [26]Then, suddenly, there was a great earthquake, so violent as to shake the prison foundations, and immediately every door was thrown wide open and everyone's chains were loosed.

27 The jailer, as he was roused from sleep, and saw the prison doors wide open, thought that the prisoners had escaped and so drew his sword, intent on committing suicide. [28]But Paul shouted to him, "Don't harm yourself, for we are all here!" [29]The jailer called for a light, rushed in and fell trembling at the feet of Paul and Silas. [30]Then, as he led them out, he asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

[31]"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," they answered him, "and you will be saved, you and your family."

32 Paul then spoke the Word of God to him and to all those in his house. [33]Then, though it was at dead of night, he took them in and washed their wounds, after which he and his household were all baptized without delay. [34]He brought them into his house and set food before them, while he with all his family rejoiced at having become believers in God.

Paul and Silas Released From Prison

35 When it was day, the police magistrates sent an officer to say, "Release these men." [36]The jailer reported this order to Paul. "The magistrates have sent word that you may be discharged," he said. "So you may now come out and go your way in peace."

37 "No," said Paul, "we are Roman citizens and you have given us a public flogging without trial, after which you cast us into prison, and now you want to thrust us out again, but secretly. No, indeed! But let them come themselves and conduct us out!"

38 The officers then went and reported this demand to the magistrates. And they became alarmed when they learned that they were Roman citizens. [39]But they came, duly apologetic, and brought them out, also begging them to depart from their city. [40]When they left the prison they went to Lydia's home, after which they met with the brethren and comforted them, and then left town.

CHAPTER 17

Founding of the Church at Thessalonica

NOW they journeyed on through Amphipolis and Appollonia until they came to Thessalonica. Here there was a Jewish synagogue. [2]According to custom, Paul went in

among them, and on three successive sabbaths reasoned with them from the Scriptures. [3]He opened up the Scriptures, trying to show that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise again from the dead, and he said, "This Jesus, whom I preach to you, is the Christ!" [4]Some of them became believers and joined Paul and Silas. There were many Greeks among the worshipers, and several prominent women.

Jewish Opposition: The Apostles Put Under Peace Bond

5 Now the Jews (who refused to believe), stirred by jealousy, got some wicked rowdies to join them, then gathered a mob and set the city in an uproar. They attacked the house of Jason, hoping to find Paul and Silas there and bring them out to the people. [6]When they did not find them there, they dragged Jason and some other brethren before the city magistrates and shouted, "These fellows who are creating confusion all over the world have come here, too! [7]And they have been at Jason's. They say that there is another King, Jesus, and they are thus acting contrary to the orders of the emperor." [8]When the mob and the city fathers heard this, they were troubled. [9]As to Jason and the others, they put them under bonds to keep the peace, and then let them go.

Paul and Silas at Berea

10 The brethren at once sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and on reaching there they went to the Jewish synagogue. [11]The people here were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they were eager to hear the Word and searched the Scriptures to see if these things were so. [12]In fact, many of them therefore became believers, including some very respectable Greek women as well as men. [13]But when the Jews of Thessalonica heard that the Word of God was being preached by Paul in Berea, they also came there to stir up the crowds against him. [14]The brethren then at once sent Paul away towards the coast, but both Silas and Timothy remained there.

The Discussion With the Jews at Athens

15 Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as
Athens, then went back, taking along orders from him that
Silas and Timothy should come to him as soon as possible.
16Then, while Paul was waiting for them in Athens, his spirit
within him was painfully excited as he saw that the city was
given to idol worship. 17He discussed the matter with the
Jews and their fellow worshipers in the synagogues, and like-
wise daily in the marketplace with people whom he met
here.

18 Then he ran up against some Epicurean and Stoic
philosophers. Some of them said, "What do you suppose
his chatterbox has to say?" Others said, "He seems to be
preaching some strange gods." They noted that he was
preaching to them the Gospel of Jesus and the resurrection.
19They then took him and brought him up to the Areopagus
(Mars Hill), and said, "May we know what this new teach-
ing is that you are proclaiming? 20For you are surely bring-
ing some strange things to our ears. So we want to know
just what these things may mean."

21 The Athenians and visitors from abroad likewise spent
their leisure time in nothing else than telling something new
or hearing about it.

Paul's Sermon on Mars Hill

22 Then Paul, standing in the middle of the Areopagus,
spoke to them:

"Men of Athens, I see that you are in every way very
religious. 23For as I was walking about and taking note of the
things that you worship, I came across an altar with this
inscription, 'To an Unknown God.' Though you do not know
Him, still you hold Him in reverence, and it is He whom I
now proclaim to you.

24 "The God who created the world and everything in it
is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not dwell in

temples made by human hands. [25]Nor is He served by the hands of men as though He needed anything, for He has Himself given to all life and breath and every good thing.

26 "From one blood He has made all the races now living on the whole face of the earth, after having beforehand determined when and where they should live. [27]They were to seek the Lord. Though He is never far from any of us, yet they might perhaps be groping for Him, hoping they might find Him. [28]Yes, it is in Him that we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For also we are His offspring.' [29]Now, since we are God's offspring, we ought not to think of the Deity as being like gold or silver or stone, shaped by man's artistry and imagination.

30 "God has indeed overlooked such times of ignorance, but now He calls on all men everywhere to repent. [31]Now He has set a day on which He will judge the people of the world with justice, through a Man whom He has appointed, and to all He has furnished proof of this by raising Him from the dead."

32 Some scoffed when they heard him mention the resurrection of the dead, but others said, "We shall hear you again about that." [33]And with that, Paul went away from the meeting.

34 There were some, too, who became believers and joined him, among whom were Dionysius, a member of the Areopagus Council, and a woman by the name of Damaris, and also some others.

CHAPTER 18

Paul at Corinth

AFTER this event, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. [2]There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus who had but lately come from Italy, together with Priscilla his wife, because Claudius had ordered all Jews to

leave Rome. Paul called on them and, [3]because they had the same trade, tentmaking, he lived with them and worked at his trade.

Founding of the Church at Corinth

4 Every sabbath he was in the synagogue, reasoning and trying to win both Jews and Greeks. [5]When Silas and Timothy came down from Macedonia, Paul was hard pressed with teaching the Word, earnestly preaching to the Jews that Jesus was the Christ. [6]But they set themselves to contradict him, even to cursing him, so he shook his coat in protest and said, "Your blood be on your own heads. It is not my fault. From now on I will go to the Gentiles."

7 Then he left them and went over to the house of one by the name of Titus Justus, a man who worshiped God. His house was next door to the synagogue. [8]Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, also became a believer in the Lord, as well as his whole family. And many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.

9 Then the Lord came to Paul in a vision one night and said, "Do not be afraid, but speak and do not keep silence! [10]For I am with you and no one will attack you to mistreat you, for many people in this city belong to Me." [11]He remained there a year and six months, during which he taught them the word of God.

Paul Tried Before Gallio

12 When Gallio was governor of Greece (Achaia), the Jews made a united attack on Paul by bringing him to trial at court. [13]"This man," they said, "is trying to get people to worship God in ways contrary to law." [14]But as Paul was ready to answer, Gallio said to the Jews, "If this were a matter of injustice or crime, O Jews, it would be reasonable that I should listen to you. [15]But since it is a question as to words and names and your own law, you will have to settle it yourselves. I refuse to be a judge in such cases." [16]And he drove them out of court.

17 Then all the Greeks pounced down on Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, and gave him a beating right before the governor. But Gallio paid no attention to this.

Paul Returns to Antioch

18 After staying there quite a while longer, Paul took leave of the brethren and took ship bound for Syria, with Priscilla and Aquila also going along. At Cenchrea he had his hair cut short because of some vow he had made. 19When he arrived at Ephesus, he left them there, but he himself went to a synagogue to talk with the Jews. 20They wanted him to make a longer stay but he would not consent to that. 21Still, when he said goodbye to them he said, "I must by all means celebrate the coming festival at Jerusalem, but, God willing, I shall come back to you." Then he boarded ship again, leaving Ephesus. 22Landing at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem and, after bringing greetings to the congregation there, he went to Antioch.

Apollos in Ephesus

23 After he had spent some time there he set out again. He made an orderly survey of the work in Galatia and Phrygia in order to strengthen all the disciples there.

24 A Jew by the name of Apollos had come to Ephesus. He was born in Alexandria, was eloquent, and had much Scripture knowledge. 25He had been instructed in the way of the Lord and, being an enthusiastic soul, he spoke and taught correctly what he knew about the Lord, although he knew of no other baptism than that of John.

26 He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him home with them and explained to him more fully the way of God. 27It was his intention to journey on to Greece. The brethren encouraged him in this and wrote to the disciples there, asking them to welcome him. And when he came there he was of great help to those who through grace were believers. 28He was a powerful debater and refuted the Jews in public, proving by the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

CHAPTER 19

The Ephesian Believers Filled With the Spirit

AND it happened while Apollos was in Corinth that Paul, having passed through the interior districts, came down to Ephesus, where He met some disciples. 2He asked them, "When you became believers, did you receive the Holy Spirit?" "No," they answered, "we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3"What baptism did you receive?" he asked them. "John's baptism," they answered. 4Then Paul said, "Yes, John baptized with a baptism of repentance, but he told the people also to believe in Him who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus, the Christ."

5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came down on them and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. 7There were in all about twelve of them.

Paul Preaches in Synagogue and School

8 He went into the synagogue and for three months he spoke freely, reasoning with them and trying to convince them in matters concerning the kingdom of God. 9But since some had hardened themselves and would not believe, besides speaking abusively of the way of the Lord before the people, he left them, kept his disciples apart, and taught every day in the school of Tyrannus. 10This he continued for two years, so that all who lived in the province of Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord Jesus.

Miracles Wrought Through Paul

11 God also worked remarkable miracles by the hands of Paul. 12Thus when handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his body were brought to the sick, the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them.

13 Then some traveling Jewish exorcists (who practiced
casting out evil spirits) tried to use the name of the Lord
Jesus over those who were demon-possessed by saying, "I
command you by Jesus, whom Paul preaches." 14There was
a Jewish high priest named Skeva who had seven sons who
were trying to do this. 15The evil spirit answering said, "I
know Jesus, and am acquainted with Paul, but who are
you?" 16Then the demon-possessed man jumped at them,
got the better of them and overpowered them, so that they
fled from the house naked and wounded.

17 This became known to all the residents of Ephesus,
both Jew and Greek. In consequence, fear fell upon all and
the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. 18Many
believers came forward to confess their evil deeds and give
an accounting of them. 19And also many who practiced the
magic arts collected their books and burned them in public.
When they estimated their value they found that they came
to about twenty-five thousand dollars.

20 Thus the Word of the Lord increased mightily and
prevailed. 21After these events, Paul resolved in the Spirit to
go to Jerusalem again by way of Macedonia and Greece,
adding "And after I have been there, I must also see Rome."
22So he sent two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, to
Macedonia, while he stayed on in the province of Asia a
while longer.

The Riot at Ephesus

23 At this time a great riot arose in regard to the new
way of life. 24A man by the name of Demetrius, a silver-
smith, had a business of making silver shrines of Artemis
(Diana), a business that brought a good profit to the work-
men. 25He called his workmen together, and also others in
the same trade, and said, "Men, you know that it is from
this business that we gain our wealth. 26But now you see
and hear that this man Paul has turned away a great many
people, not only here at Ephesus but in almost the whole

of the province of Asia, by his preaching that the things that are made by the hands of men are not gods at all. [27]There is a real danger, therefore, not only that our business will fall into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis (Diana) will count for nothing. And so she whom all Asia and the whole world worship will have all her grandeur destroyed."

28 They became furious when they heard this, and shouted, "Great is Artemis (Diana) of the Ephesians!" [29]The whole city was filled with the uproar. They seized Gaius and Aristarchus, two of Paul's fellow travelers from Macedonia, and in a mob rush took them to the theater.

30 It was Paul's intention to face the crowd, but his disciples would not hear of it. [31]Some of the town officials, too, being on friendly footing with him, sent word to him requesting him not to venture into the theater. [32]Meanwhile, some were shouting one thing and some another, for the meeting was in confusion and most of them had no idea as to why they had come together.

Alexander Quiets the Mob

33 The Jews then pushed Alexander to the front, and someone in the crowd asked him to speak. [34]But as soon as they recognized that he was a Jew, they all cried out as with one voice, "Great is Artemis (Diana) of the Ephesians!" [35]But the city clerk (Alexander) managed to quiet the mob and made a speech: "Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that the city of Ephesus is the temple-keeper of the great goddess Artemis (Diana), and of her image that fell down from the sky? [36]Since these facts cannot be contradicted, you must be calm and do nothing rash. [37]You have now brought here these men. They are not guilty of robbing temples or defaming your goddess. [38]Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen can take legal action if they have any charge to bring against them, for we do have courts and judges; let them go to law. [39]And if you want some other

matter cleared up, it should be settled in the regular assembly. 40We are really in danger of being accused of rioting today and we cannot give any justifiable reason whatever for having put on this demonstration." 41With these words he dismissed the mob.

CHAPTER 20

Paul in Greece and Macedonia

WHEN the uproar had ceased, Paul called his disciples to him, said goodbye to them and took leave to go to Macedonia. 2When he had passed through those parts and had given them much encouraging advice, he went on to Greece. 3There he stayed three months. Then, as he was about to take ship for Syria, he discovered that the Jews had made a plot against him, and so he decided to return by way of Macedonia.

4 The following were his fellow travelers as far as the province of Asia: Sopater of Berea, Aristarchus and Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy; also Tychicus and Trophimus from Asia. 5These had gone on ahead and waited for us at Troas.

Eutychus Restored After His Fall

6 After the Festival of Unleavened Bread we set sail from Philippi and came to them at Troas. It took us five days to get there and we remained a whole week.

7 On the first day of the week, when the disciples had met to break bread, Paul preached to them, since he expected to leave the next day. He continued talking till midnight. 8There were many lights in the upper room where they were assembled. 9In the window there sat a young man named Eutychus. As Paul kept on preaching, he sank into a heavy sleep. At last, overcome by sleep, he fell from the third story down to the ground, where he was picked up for dead.

10 Paul hastened down and bent over him and took him
in his arms, and said, "Don't be alarmed, for there is still
life in him!" 11So he went up again, broke bread and ate,
after which he conversed with them a long time, even till
daybreak, and then he departed. 12And they took the young
man home again, alive, which cheered them greatly.

From Troas to Miletus

13 We went on ahead of Paul, took ship and sailed to
Assos, where we were to take him on board. He had planned
it that way, as he intended to go that far on foot. 14When
we came to Assos and met him there, we took him aboard
and proceeded to Mitylene. 15And going from there by ship,
we arrived on the following day opposite Chios. On the
second day we stopped at Samos, then tarried awhile at
Trogyllium, and the third day we arrived at Miletus. 16Paul
had decided to pass by Ephesus so as not to spend much
time in the province of Asia. He wanted to hurry on so that
he could, if possible, be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.

Paul Meets With the Ephesian Elders

17 From Miletus he sent a message to Ephesus, summon-
ing the elders of the congregation to come to him. 18And
when they were come to him he spoke to them:

"From the first day that I came to the province of Asia,
you know how I conducted myself all the time. 19I served
the Lord with all humility and with tears through the trials
that came upon me because of the wicked plots of the Jews.
20I never failed to tell you everything that would be profit-
able to you, and I taught you in public and from house to
house. 21I preached to Jew and Greek alike about turning
back to God and believing in our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 "And now, as you see, I am on my way to Jerusalem,
compelled to do so by the Spirit, and I have no idea of
what will befall me there. 23Except this, that in every city I
come to, the Holy Spirit tells me chains and affliction await

me. 24But I am not much concerned about that, nor do I
value my life as precious to myself, except that I should
like with joy to finish my course, the work that the Lord
Jesus gave me to do, namely, to preach the whole Gospel
of the grace of God.

25 "And now I am quite sure that no one of you, among
whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom of God, will
ever see my face again. 26Therefore I testify before you on
this day that I am innocent of the blood of all of you. 27For
I never shrank from telling you the whole purpose of God.
28Keep watch, therefore, over yourselves and over the whole
flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you shepherds, to
feed the church of God which He purchased for Himself with
His own blood.

29 "Yes, I well know that monstrous wolves will come in
among you after my departure, and they will not spare the
flock. 30And from your own number, too, men will rise up
and teach false doctrines so as to get disciples to follow
them. 31So I say, be on the watch. And remember the three
years that I continued to admonish every one of you, night
and day, even with tears.

32 "And now, brethren, I commit you to God and His
gracious Word which can build you up and give you your
inheritance among all the saints. 33I have not coveted any-
one's silver or gold or clothing. 34You all know that with
my hands I earned enough to care for my own wants and
for those who were with me. 35In all things I have showed
you that by working like this we can help those who are
weak. And let us remember the words that the Lord Jesus
himself spoke, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' "

36 When he had finished his talk, he kneeled with the
others and prayed. 37They all wept a great deal, and they
embraced Paul and kissed him. 38The thing that grieved them
most of all was that he had said that they would never see
his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

CHAPTER 21

From Miletus to Tyre

AFTER we had parted from them we set sail and
came straight down to Cos, and the next day we sailed on to
Rhodes, and from there to Patara. [2]There we found a ship
that was crossing over to Phoenicia, so we got on board and
set sail. [3]We came in sight of Cyprus, but passed it on our
left and sailed on to Syria, where we landed at Tyre, the
place where the ship was to unload its cargo.

4 While there, we looked up the disciples and stayed with
them for seven days. Through the Spirit, they told Paul not
to go to Jerusalem. [5]When we had stayed out our time there,
we left them and continued on our way. And all of them,
including the wives and children, escorted us as far as out-
side of the city limits. Then we all kneeled down on the
beach and prayed.

From Tyre to Jerusalem

6 Then, having said farewell, we went aboard the ship
and they returned to their homes. [7]At the end of the voyage
from Tyre we arrived at Ptolemais. There we greeted the
brethren and remained with them one day.

8 The next day we (Paul and his companions) departed
and came to Caesarea. We came to the home of Philip, the
evangelist, who had been one of the seven deacons, and we
stayed with him. [9]He had four unmarried daughters who had
the gift of prophecy.

10 While we were staying there a few days, a prophet
named Agabus came down from Judea. [11]He came over to
us and took Paul's belt, with which he bound his own feet
and hands and then said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'Just
so will the Jews in Jerusalem bind the man who owns this
belt, and they will deliver him into the hands of the
heathen.' "

12 When we heard this, we and the people there begged
Paul not to go to Jerusalem. 13This was his reply, "What do
you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am
ready not only to be bound, but to die for the name of the
Lord Jesus."
14 Then since he would not be persuaded, we kept silent
except to say, "The will of the Lord be done!"

Paul in Jerusalem

15 After a few days we got our baggage ready and went
to Jerusalem. 16Some of the disciples in Caesarea went with
us and brought us to the house of Mnason, a man from
Cyprus who was a disciple of long standing. We were to stay
with him.
17 When we reached Jerusalem the brethren there gave
us a joyful welcome. 18Paul went with us the next day to
call on James, and all the elders were gathered there. 19After
having greeted them, Paul gave a detailed account of what
God had done for the Gentiles through his work.
20 On hearing this, they praised the Lord. But they said
to him, "You see, brother, how many thousands of Jews
have become believers, yet they are all zealous supporters
of the law. 21They have been informed about you, that you
teach all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to break
away from the law of Moses, telling them not to circumcise
their children and not to follow the old customs. 22What,
then, is to be done? A crowd of them will surely gather
about you when they hear that you have come. 23"There-
fore, this is what we suggest you do: We have four men
with us who have taken a vow. 24Take these men with
you, go through the purification ritual with them, and pay
the expenses, so that they may shave their heads. Then every-
one will know that there is nothing to the reports that they
have heard about you, but that, on the contrary you, your-
self, are strictly keeping the law. 25And as for the Gentile
believers, we wrote to them saying that in our judgment

they need not observe any such thing, except that they must abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from unchastity."

26 The next day, then, Paul took the men, purified himself with them and entered the temple, giving notice when they should complete the days of purification and when the offering for each one of them was to be made.

Paul Mobbed in the Temple

27 As the seven days were about ended, some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the temple. They excited the whole crowd into an uproar and laid hands on him. They shouted, 28"Men of Israel! Help! This is the fellow who is everywhere attacking our people, our law and this sanctuary. And besides, he has brought Greeks into the temple and has made this holy place unclean." 29For they had seen him in the city previously in company with Trophimus, the Ephesian, and supposed that Paul had brought him with him into the temple.

30 The whole city was then in an uproar, and the crowd surged back and forth. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, after which the doors were shut. 31While they were getting ready to kill him, word came to the colonel of the regiment that the people were rioting all over Jerusalem. 32He at once summoned his soldiers and captains, and charged down on them. At the sight of the colonel and his soldiers, they stopped beating Paul.

Paul Arrested, But Permitted to Speak

33 The colonel then came and arrested Paul. Having given orders that he should be bound with two chains, he inquired as to who he was and what he had done. 34Some in the mob were shouting one thing, and others something else, and it was impossible to find out anything certain on

account of the clamor, so he gave orders that Paul be brought to the barracks. [35]The violence of the mob was so great that when they reached the steps Paul had to be carried by the soldiers. [36]The rabble kept pressing on behind and shouting, "Do away with him!"

37 When he was being brought to the barracks, Paul said to the colonel, "May I be permitted to say something to you?" He answered, "So you know Greek? [38]Then you are not the Egyptian who some time ago incited a revolt and led the four thousand rebels into the desert?" [39]"No," said Paul, "I am in fact a Jew, a citizen of Tarsus in Cilicia, not a bad city at all. And I beg you therefore to let me speak to the people."

40 The colonel gave him permission to speak. So Paul, standing there on the steps, made a gesture with his hand to the people. A great hush then ensued and he spoke to them in the Hebrew language.

CHAPTER 22

Paul Tells of His Persecution of Christians

"BRETHREN and fathers," he said, "listen to the defense that I am now going to make to you." [2]When they heard that he spoke to them in the Hebrew language they became still more quiet. And he continued:

3 "I am, without question, a Jew. Though I was born in Tarsus of Cilicia, yet I was brought up in this city. I was trained at the feet of Gamaliel, given a thorough knowledge of our ancestral law, and was as zealous for God as you all are this day.

4 "I persecuted to the death those who followed the new Way. I put both men and women in chains, imprisoning them. [5]As to this fact, both the high priest and all the elders can bear me witness. Indeed, I received letters from them to the

brethren in Damascus, and I set out for Damascus to seize believers there, to bring them back in chains to Jerusalem to be punished.

His Conversion on the Damascus Road

6 "But as I was on my way and coming close to Damascus, about noon, all at once a great light from heaven shone about me. 7I then fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' 8I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' 9And those who were with me were alarmed. They saw the light but did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10'Lord, what shall I do?' I asked. And the Lord said to me, 'Rise up and go to Damascus. There you will be told all that you will be appointed to do.'

He Tells of His Baptism

11 "Now, since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, those who were with me led me by the hand until I came to Damascus. 12Ananias was there. He was a devout observer of the law and was well spoken of by all the Jews who lived there. 13He came to me and said as he was standing near me, 'Brother Saul, look up!' And at that very moment I looked up and saw him. 14Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has appointed you to know His will, to see the Just One and to hear His voice. 15And you are to be His witness, telling all men what you have seen and heard. 16And now, why delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

His Call to the Gentiles

17 "Then it came about that, after I had returned to Jerusalem, I fell into a trance while I was at prayer in the temple. 18And I saw Him saying to me, 'Make haste and get out of Jerusalem quickly, because they will not accept your testi-

mony about Me.' [19]'Lord,' I said, 'they themselves know that in every synagogue I used to imprison and flog those who believed in You. [20]Also, that when the blood of Your martyr Stephen was shed, I stood there and gave my approval while looking after the clothing of those who murdered him.' [21]And He said to me, 'Go, for I will send you afar off to the Gentiles.' "

22 They had listened to him until he spoke this word, at which they gave a mighty shout, "Away from the earth with such a one! He is not fit to live!" [23]They kept on yelling, tearing their clothing and throwing garments and dust into the air.

Paul Declares His Roman Citizenship

24 Meanwhile, the colonel had ordered that Paul be brought into the barracks; also that he be examined and flogged to find out why they cried out against him. [25]And as they tied him with thongs, Paul said to the captain who was in charge, "Is it lawful for you to flog a man who is a Roman citizen, and who has not been condemned?"

26 When the captain heard this, he reported it to the colonel and said to him, "Look here! What are you about to do? This man is a Roman citizen." [27]The colonel then came and asked Paul, "Are you a Roman citizen? Tell me." And he answered, "Yes." [28]The colonel then remarked, "I paid a large sum for this citizenship." And Paul said in reply, "But I was born a free citizen."

29 Then those who were about to examine him left him at once. Also the colonel himself was worried on discovering that Paul was a Roman citizen, especially since he had him bound. [30]So the next day he took off his chains and commanded the chief priests and the whole council to meet, and then he brought Paul down and set him before them, for he wanted to know the truth as to why he was accused by the Jews.

CHAPTER 23

'aul Before the Sanhedrin

PAUL looked straight at the council members and aid, "Brethren, I have lived before God with a good conscience until this day."

2 At this the high priest Ananias told those who were near o give him a blow on the mouth. 3Then Paul said to him, God Himself will smite you, you whitewashed wall! You it here to try me according to the law, but contrary to the aw, you order me to be struck."

4 The bystanders objected, "Do you dare to revile God's igh priest?" 5"Brethren," answered Paul, "I was not at all ware that he was the high priest. I know that it has been vritten, 'You shall not speak evil of the ruler of your eople.' "

6 Then, when Paul saw that a part of the council was ade up of Sadducees, and another part of Pharisees, he ried out, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee and of Pharisee stock, nd I am here to be tried concerning my hope for the resurection of the dead."

7 At these words an argument arose between the Phariees and the Sadducees, and the council was divided. 8For the adducees hold that there is no resurrection and no angel or pirit, whereas the Pharisees confess faith in both. 9The meetng became very noisy. Some of the scribes belonging to the harisees argued, "We find nothing evil in this man. Maybe e has had an angel or a spirit speak to him. Why not? Let s not fight against God."

10 As the debate became very heated, the colonel, fearng that Paul might be torn to pieces by them, ordered his oldiers to take him by force from among them and bring im back to the barracks. 11On the following night the Lord ame to his side and said, "Paul, be brave, for you will be Ay witness in Rome, just as you have given a full account f Me in Jerusalem."

The Conspiracy to Kill Paul

12 When day dawned, some of the Jews came together
and formed a conspiracy, placing themselves under an oath
not to eat or drink till they had killed Paul. 13There were
more than forty who took this oath. 14They came to the
chief priests and elders and said, "We have taken a solemn
oath not to taste any food till we shall have put Paul to
death. 15We therefore ask you, together with the council, to
get the colonel to bring him down to you tomorrow on the
pretext that you want to examine his case more fully. And
before he gets near to you we shall be waiting to kill him."

16 It happened that a son of Paul's sister learned about
this ambush, so he came over to the barracks and told Paul.
17So Paul called one of the captains to him and said, "Take
this young man to the colonel, for he has something to re-
port to him." 18Then he brought him to the colonel, saying,
"Paul, the prisoner, called me over and requested me to
bring this young man to you, for he has something to tell
you." 19The colonel took him by the hand and, withdrawing
to one side, said to him privately, "What is it that you have
to tell me?" 20So he said, "The Jews have agreed to make
this request of you, that you bring Paul to the council to-
morrow as though they were going to examine his case more
accurately. 21Do not let them persuade you, for more than
forty men are lying in ambush for him, having taken an
oath not to eat or drink till they have put him to death. And
they are all set, waiting for your move."

22 The colonel then dismissed the young man with the
strict advice, "Do not tell anybody that you have given me
this information."

Paul Sent to Felix in Caesarea

23 Then the colonel called two captains to him and said,
"Make ready two hundred foot soldiers, also seventy horse-
men and two hundred spearmen, to leave for Caesarea at

nine o'clock tonight. [24]And provide mounts for Paul to ride
and take him safely to Felix, the governor."
25 He also wrote a letter as follows, [26]"Claudias Lysias,
to the most excellent governor, Felix — Greeting! [27]This man
had been seized by the Jews and was about to be put to
death by them, when I came on them with my regiment.
I rescued him because I had learned that he was a Roman.
[28]I wanted to know the charge they had against him, so I
brought him before their council. [29]I learned there that he
was accused of matters pertaining to their law, and that he
was not charged with anything that was punishable by death
or even imprisonment. [30]And when I was told that the Jews
were about to carry out a plot against the man, I at once
sent him to you and gave orders to his accusers to appear
before you and make their charges against him."
31 The soldiers, therefore, according to orders, took Paul
and brought him by night to Antipatris. [32]Then, on the day
after, they sent the horsemen to go with him while they them-
selves returned to their quarters. [33]When they came to Caes-
area the letter was given to the governor, and Paul was also
presented to him. [34]When the governor had read the letter
he asked what province he was from, and was told that he
was from Cilicia. [35]"I will give you a full hearing," he said,
"when your accusers have come." And he gave orders that
he be kept in custody in Herod's palace.

CHAPTER 24

Paul Before Felix

FIVE days later, Ananias the high priest arrived,
accompanied by some elders and a lawyer by the name of
Tertullus, who made a complaint against Paul before Felix.
[2]When he was called on, Tertullus began his charge by saying,
3 "Most excellent Felix, because of you we enjoy real
peace, and through your forethought wrongs have been righted

in this nation. It is with joy and thankfulness that we accept these things in every way and in every place. 4And now, in order not to weary you with all this, I simply want to ask you to give us, out of kindness, a brief hearing. 5We have found this man a pest, an organizer of insurrections among all the Jews in the whole world, and a ringleader in the sect of the Nazarenes. 6He even tried to desecrate the temple, but we caught him and would have judged him according to our law. 7But Lysias, the colonel, stepped in and with great force took him out of our hands. 8And he ordered his accusers to bring charges before you. By questioning him yourself you will be able to learn from him everything of which we accuse him."

9 The Jews agreed to his statement, declaring that these accusations were true.

Paul's First Defense

10 The governor then gave Paul a signal to make an answer, and he said, "I am rather happy to defend myself, knowing as I do that you have been a judge over this nation for a number of years. 11You can easily find out that it is not more than twelve days since I went to Jerusalem to worship. 12Also that they did not find me in argument with anybody or stirring up the people in the temple or the synagogues, or the city. 13Nor can they prove any of the charges that they make against me.

14 "But this I do admit, that I worship the God of our fathers, according to the new way they call heresy; but I believe everything that has been recorded in the law and the prophets. 15In God I have a hope for the very things that they themselves are looking for, namely, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust. 16And therefore I train myself always to have a good conscience before God and man.

17 "After being away for a number of years, I returned to bring alms to my people and present offerings. 18They

found me in the temple, purified, not in a crowd, not in rioting. But there were some Jews there from the province of Asia. [19]They should have been here to complain if they had anything against me. [20]Or let these men here give an account of what blame they found in me when I stood before the council. [21]Yes, there was one thing they resented, for I cried out, 'I am here to be tried concerning my hope for the resurrection of the dead.' "

The Case Temporarily Postponed

22 Then Felix, who already had considerable knowledge of the Christian way, postponed the case, saying, "When Lysias, the colonel, comes down, I will finish the examination of your case." [23]Then he gave orders to the captain to keep Paul in custody, but with some liberty, and not to keep his friends from seeing and helping him.

Paul's Second Defense

24 Some days later Felix came with Drusilla, his wife, who was a Jewess. He sent for Paul and listened to him speak of faith in Christ Jesus. [25]And when he spoke about righteousness, self control and the coming judgment, Felix became frightened and said, "Go now, and I will send for you when it will be convenient for me." [26]He was hoping that Paul would give him money for his release. For that reason, too, he sent for him often and conversed with him. [27]Then, after two years, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus, but Felix, wishing to gain favor with the Jews, left Paul in custody.

CHAPTER 25

Paul Before Festus. He Appeals to the Emperor

THREE days after Festus had come into his province, he went from Caesarea to Jerusalem. [2]The chief priests and the chief men of the Jews brought charges against

Paul, with petitions. [3]They asked as a special favor that he would summon Paul to Jerusalem, with the intention of lying in wait for him and killing him on the way.

4 But Festus replied that Paul should be kept at Caesarea and that he himself was soon to go there. [5]"But," he said, "if there is anything wicked about the man, let the men of authority among you go with me to bring a charge against him."

6 When he had spent not more than eight or ten days there, he went back to Caesarea. The next day he sat on the judgment seat and gave orders that Paul should be brought in. [7]When Paul came in, the Jews who had come down from Jerusalem stood about him, charging him with many and serious offenses, none of which they could prove. [8]In his defense, Paul said, "I have not sinned against any law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against the emperor." [9]Then Festus, in hope of winning the favor of the Jews, asked Paul, "Are you willing to go to Jerusalem and to stand trial before me there in regard to these things?" [10]Paul answered, "I am now being tried at the emperor's court, the very place where I ought to be tried. I never did the Jews any wrong, as you know very well. [11]Indeed, if I am guilty of wrongdoing and have done something deserving of death, I do not refuse to die; but if what they say against me is not true, I will let no man turn me over to them. I appeal to the emperor."

12 Then Festus, after having conferred with his council, answered, "You have appealed to the emperor; to the emperor you shall go."

Festus Tells King Agrippa About Paul

13 Some days later, King Agrippa and Bernice came down to Caesarea to pay their respects to Festus. [14]As they stayed there for several days, Festus related to the king the story of Paul. "There is a man here," he said, "who was left in prison by Felix. [15]When I was at Jerusalem, the chief

priests and elders of the Jews presented their case against him and demanded a judgment against him. [16]I replied that it was not the Roman custom to give any man up to destruction before he had been face to face with his accusers and had had a chance to defend himself against their charges. [17]So they came here with me, and without delay I took my seat in the courtroom and ordered the man to be brought in. [18]But when his accusers took their stand, they brought forward no charge whatever of crimes such as I had in mind. [19]Rather, their dispute with him was in regard to their system of religion and someone named Jesus, who was dead but who was declared by Paul to be alive again.

20 "I was perplexed as to how to deal with these issues, so I asked him if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem and be tried on these charges there. [21]At this, Paul appealed to have his case reserved for the emperor's decision, and so I gave orders that he should be kept in prison till I could send him to the emperor."

22 Then Agrippa said to Festus, "I, too, would like to hear this man myself." He answered, "Tomorrow you will hear him."

Paul Brought Before King Agrippa

23 The next day Agrippa and Bernice came with great pomp and entered the courtroom, together with the army heads and the principal men of the city. Festus then gave orders that Paul be brought in.

24 Then Festus said, "King Agrippa, and all the rest of you who are here with us, you see this man against whom all the Jews, both here and at Jerusalem, have been clamoring that he does not deserve to live any longer. [25]As for myself, I have not noted anything in his record deserving of death; but since he, himself, has asked for a hearing before the emperor, I have decided to send him on to him. [26]Yet when I write to my sovereign, I have nothing definite to say against him. It is for that reason that I have brought him

before you all, and before you especially, King Agrippa, in order that the examination may give me something definite to write about. [27]To me it seems absurd to send a prisoner up for trial without stating what charges are made against him."

CHAPTER 26

Paul's Defense Before King Agrippa

AGRIPPA then said to Paul, "You may now give an account of yourself." So Paul, extending his hand, began his defense:

2 "I consider myself fortunate, King Agrippa, that I may defend myself before you today, against all the charges that the Jews have made against me. [3]And since you are so very familiar with all the customs and controversial questions of the Jews, I ask you to hear me patiently.

4 "All the Jews are familiar with my mode of life from my youth on, for it was spent from the beginning among my own people, and here at Jerusalem. [5]Their earliest memory of me, if they would admit it, would be that I lived the life of a Pharisee, the strictest sect of our religion. [6]And now I am on trial for the hope in the promise that God made to our fathers. [7]In the hope of seeing that promise fulfilled, our twelve tribes served God zealously night and day. And it is on account of that hope, O King Agrippa, that I am being accused by the Jews.

8 "Why do you think it incredible that God should raise the dead? [9]Yes, I too once thought it my duty to do many things in opposition to Jesus of Nazareth. [10]I did so in Jerusalem. There I locked up numbers of saints in the prisons by orders from the chief priests. And when they were to be put to death, I voted against them. [11]In all the synagogues, many a time I punished them and forced them to blaspheme. And in my burning zeal and furious rage against them, I kept after them even into foreign cities.

12 "So, when I was going to Damascus on such an errand,
I had authority and commission from the chief priests. [13]I
was on the road at noon, O King, when I saw a light from
heaven brighter than the sun shining around me and my fel-
low travelers. [14]Then, as we all fell down to the ground, I
heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew
tongue, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me? It will be
hard for you to rebel and to resist.' [15]And I said, 'Who are
You, Lord?' And he said, 'I am Jesus whom you are perse-
cuting. [16]But get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared
to you for the specific purpose of appointing you to serve
Me and to bear witness of what you have seen and also of
what I will reveal to you. [17]I will save you from your people
and from the Gentiles, to whom I now send you. [18]You are
to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light,
and from the power of Satan to God, so that through faith
in Me they may have their sins forgiven and have an inheri-
tance among those who are holy.' "

19 "And so, O king Agrippa, I did not disobey that
heavenly vision. [20]I witnessed first to those in Damascus and
in Jerusalem, and then throughout the whole of Judea, and
I preached even to the Gentiles that they must repent and
turn to God and live lives consistent with repentance.

21 "That is why the Jews laid hold of me in the temple
and tried to kill me. [22]And God has helped me to this very
day, and therefore I have stood up and witnessed to both
small and great, claiming nothing else than what the proph-
ets and Moses said would take place — [23]namely this, that
Christ must suffer, that He was the first to rise from the dead,
and that He would give light to the Jewish people and the
Gentiles."

King Agrippa Almost Persuaded

24 When he had spoken thus far in his defense, Festus
exclaimed in a loud voice, "Paul, you are insane! Much
learning has made you raving mad!"

25 "Most noble Festus," answered Paul, "I am not crazy. On the contrary, I am speaking the sober truth. 26And since the king is well informed in these matters, therefore I dare speak to him more freely. Nothing that I have said is news to him; of that I am sure, for these things did not happen in some obscure corner. 27King Agrippa, you believe the prophets, don't you? I know you do!"

28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian!" 29To this Paul replied, "Oh, I could wish to God that not only you, but also everyone who hears me today, whether with little or much persuasion, would become such as I am, except for these chains!"

30 After this was said, the king rose, as did also the governor and Bernice and those sitting with them. 31When they had gone out, they talked the matter over together and concluded, "This man has not done anything punishable by death or even imprisonment." 32And Agrippa added this remark to Festus, "If he had not appealed to the emperor, he could have been set free."

CHAPTER 27

Paul Is Sent to Rome

AND when it was decided that we should sail for Italy, they placed Paul, together with some other prisoners, in the care of a captain named Julius, a member of the imperial regiment. 2We went on board a ship from Adramyttium, which was about to sail along the coastal places of Asia Minor. And as we set out to sea, we had with us Aristarchus, a Macedonian of Thessalonica. 3The next day we made a stop at Sidon. There Julius, who was kind to Paul, gave him leave to visit his friends and to refresh himself.

4 Then, setting out again, we sailed along the south coast of Cyprus so as to avoid the contrary winds. 5And then,

having crossed the sea along Cilicia and Pamphylia, we arrived at Myra in Lycia. [6]There the captain discovered an Alexandrian ship that was bound for Italy, and transferred us to it. [7]We sailed along slowly for several days and had difficulty in reaching Cnidus. As the wind would not let us go on, we sailed along the south of Crete, passing Salmone. And though hardly making any headway, we came to a place called Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea.

The Storm at Sea

9 Since much time had been lost, the fall festival was already over and navigation had become dangerous. Paul therefore gave a warning. [10]"Sirs," he said, "it seems to me that this voyage will likely end in disaster and great loss, not only of the cargo and ship, but also of our lives."

11 The captain, however, put his faith in the pilot and the owner of the ship rather than in what Paul had said. [12]Furthermore, the harbor was not fit to winter in, so the great majority favored the idea of setting out to sea again, in hopes that they might possibly reach port and winter in Phoenix, a harbor in Crete facing northeast and southeast.

13 Then, when a gentle south wind started to blow, they supposed that their plan was favorable, so they weighed anchor and set sail, keeping close to the Cretan shore. [14]But it was not long before a terrific gale, known as a northeaster, burst down upon them. [15]The ship was caught in the grip of the wind and could not face it, hence we gave up and were driven before it. [16]As we passed under the shelter of a small island called Clauda, we managed with great difficulty to make the ship's boat safe. [17]They hoisted it up and then they bound ropes around the ship to brace it. But from fear that they would be thrown upon the Syrtis quicksands, they lowered the sail and let the ship drift.

18 The next day, as the ship was violently tossed about by the tempest, they began to throw the cargo overboard. [19]And on the third day with their own hands they threw

overboard the ship's tackle. [20]For many days we saw neither sun nor stars, and a great storm continued to bear down on us, so finally we lost all hope of being saved.

Paul's Encouragement and Leadership

21 And when they had not had food to eat for a long time, Paul stood up among them and said, "Friends, truly you should have listened to me and not set sail from Crete to undergo this disaster and loss. [22]But now I want to encourage you to be of good cheer, for there will not be any loss of life among you, but only the loss of the ship. [23]For last night there stood by my side an angel from the God to whom I belong and whom I serve. [24]The angel said, 'Paul! Don't be afraid! You must appear before the emperor, and God has given to you the lives of all your fellow voyagers.' [25]Therefore, cheer up, men! I believe in God, and that it will turn out exactly as it was told me. [26]We shall, however, be shipwrecked on some island."

27 On the fourteenth night of the storm, as we were drifting about in the Adriatic Sea, the sailors about midnight began to suspect that land was near. [28]By taking soundings they found the depth to be one hundred and twenty feet. When they had gone a little farther, they sounded again and found ninety feet. [29]Then, fearing that we might be dashed against the rocky shore, they dropped four anchors from the stern and waited for dawn to come soon.

30 The sailors were planning to abandon the ship. So, under pretense that they were going to drop anchors from the prow, they lowered the boat into the sea. [31]Then Paul said to the captain and the soldiers, "These men must stay in the ship or you cannot be saved!" [32]Then the soldiers cut away the ropes of the boat and let it go.

33 Just before the break of day, Paul urged them all to eat some food. "Today is the fourteenth day," he said, "that you have not had time to eat because of your being on watch. [34]I beg you, therefore, to take something to eat. You

need it for your own safety. For not one of you will lose even a hair of his head."

35 Having said this, he took some bread, gave thanks to God before them all, broke the bread and began to eat. 36All of them, then, much encouraged, helped themselves to food. 37There were, all told, two hundred and seventy-six of us on the ship. 38When they had satisfied their hunger, they threw the supply of grain into the sea in order to lighten the ship.

The Shipwreck on Malta

39 When daylight came they could not recognize the land, but they spied a bay with a beach and resolved to run the ship ashore there if possible. 40So they cut away the anchors and left them in the sea. Then they loosened the ropes on the rudders, hoisted the foresail to the wind and made for the shore. 41But they struck a shoal, made by two opposing sea currents, and the ship ran aground. The prow of the ship stuck fast and was immovable, but the stern broke up under the violent pounding of the waves.

42 The soldiers had in mind to kill the prisoners, fearing that they would swim ashore and escape. 43But the captain wanted to save Paul and prevented them from carrying out their intentions. He ordered all who could swim to jump overboard and strike out for the shore. 44And as for the rest, some should use boards, and others should grab anything they could find on the ship. And in this way it came about that they all got safely to land.

CHAPTER 28

The Miracle of the Viper

AFTER their escape, they learned that the island was Malta (Melita). 2The natives there were unusually kind to us. They made a bonfire and welcomed all of us to it, for

there was a cold, drenching rain. [3]And Paul, too, gathered an armful of sticks and threw them on the fire. As he did so, a viper crawled out of the heat and wound itself around his hand.

4 When the natives saw the serpent hanging from his hand, they said to one another, "This man is surely a murderer, for, although he was saved out of the sea, justice will not let him live." [5]Paul, however, just shook off the reptile into the fire and suffered no injury at all. [6]They were, meanwhile, expecting him to swell up or suddenly to drop down dead. For a long time they waited and watched, but saw no harm come to him; then they changed their opinion and declared that he was a god.

The Healing of Publius' Father

7 In that part of the island were estates belonging to the governor, named Publius. He gave us lodging and entertained us for three days in a friendly way. [8]Now it so happened that the father of Publius lay ill with fever and dysentery. Paul went to see him. He prayed for him, laid his hands on him and healed him. [9]Because of this, the other people of the island who were ill also came to him and were healed. [10]These also showed us honor in many ways and when we sailed away they supplied us with things that we needed.

11 We had stayed on the island three months, then departed in an Alexandrian ship that had wintered there. It was called the Dioscuri, after the twin brothers Castor and Pollux. [12]On our way we put in at Syracuse, remaining three days. [13]From there we sailed around and reached Rhegium. A day later a southerly breeze came up and we arrived at Puteoli the second day. [14]Here we found some brethren who prevailed on us to tarry with them for seven days. Then we went on to Rome.

15 The brethren there had had news of our coming and came out as far as the Forum of Appius and the Three

Taverns to meet us. When Paul saw them, he gave God thanks and took renewed courage.

Paul Explains His Imprisonment

16 When at length we reached Rome, the captain turned the prisoners over to the commander of the prison camp, whereas he let Paul live by himself with a soldier who had charge of him. 17After three days Paul invited the leading Jews to come together. And when they had gathered, he addressed them, "Brethren, I had not done anything against our people, or the customs of our fathers, yet I was made a prisoner at Jerusalem and delivered into the hands of the Romans. 18They tried me but found no reason why they should put me to death and were therefore willing to set me free. 19But the Jews objected to this, so I had to appeal to the emperor but not with the idea that I would bring a charge against my people. 20So the reason why I have asked to meet you and talk with you is this: It is on account of the hope of Israel that I carry these chains." 21"We have not had any letters from Judea about you," they answered, "and not one of the brethren who has come here has ever reported or said anything bad about you. 22But we should like to hear your views from you personally. As for this new sect, all we know is that it is condemned everywhere."

23 When they had set a day for him, a good many of them came to his house and he preached to them, explaining to them fully about the kingdom of God and trying to persuade them about Jesus, both from the law of Moses and also from the prophets. He continued from morning till evening. 24Some, indeed, were convinced by his testimony, but others remained in doubt.

Paul Preaches the Gospel in Rome

25 When they parted, still disagreeing with one another, Paul had the last word. He said, "The Holy Spirit was right when he spoke to our fathers through the prophet Isaiah. 26He

said, 'Go to this people and say, "You will hear and hear, but never understand; and look and look, but never perceive.
[27]For this people's heart has grown fat; they hardly hear with their ears and they have shut their eyes; otherwise, they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and be converted, so as to let Me heal them" '
(*Isaiah* 6:9, 10).

28 "Therefore, I want you to know that the Gospel of salvation from God is now to be sent to the Gentiles! And they will listen to it!"

29 When he had spoken these words, the Jews left him, but continued the discussion among themselves. [30]Paul remained two years in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. [31]He continued to preach the kingdom of God and to teach about the Lord Jesus Christ, fearlessly and unhindered.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

MY name is Paul. I am a servant of Jesus Christ, was called to be an apostle, and set apart to preach God's Gospel. [2]This Gospel God had promised long ago through His prophets in the holy Scriptures. [3]It tells about His Son, who in the flesh descended from David. [4]Through His resurrection from the dead, the Holy Spirit has declared Him to be the Son of God in power, and this Jesus is our Lord. [5]Through Him we have not only received grace, but also apostleship to preach obedience and faith in His name to all peoples. [6]This also includes you who have been called to belong to Jesus Christ. [7]So to all of you in Rome, God's beloved, called to be saints: Grace be to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Reasons for Writing

8 In the first place, I want you to know that I thank God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because the whole world is getting to know about your faith. [9]I serve God by preaching the Gospel about His Son with my whole heart, and He is my witness that I never cease to make mention of you. [10]In my prayers I always ask that sometime, somehow, God willing, I may be permitted to come to you. [11]I do long to meet you, hoping that I may have some spiritual gift to share with you to strengthen you. [12]I mean, of course, that both you and I can obtain mutual comfort and strength by sharing each other's faith.

13 In the next place, I want you to know, brethren, that I have often planned to visit you — though so far I have always been hindered — in order that I might claim some fruit among you also, as I can among other Gentiles elsewhere. [14]I owe a debt both to Greeks and non-Greeks, both to the learned and the illiterate. [15]So, for my part, I am sin-

cerely eager to preach the Gospel, also to you who are at Rome.

The Just Shall Live by Faith

16 No, I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,
for it is God's power to save everyone who believes — to the
Jew first, and then also to the Greek. 17In it is shown God's
plan to justify us. It is by faith, first and last. As the Scrip-
ture says, "The just shall live by faith" (*Habakkuk* 2:4).

The Guilt of the World

18 God has revealed Himself in His anger against all
the impiety and injustice of men who by their wicked ways
suppress the truth. 19Indeed, what can be known about God
has been made plain to them, for God Himself has made
it plain. 20Men have no excuse at all, for ever since the
world was made, God's invisible attributes, such as His eter-
nal power and divinity, have been clearly perceptible and
understandable through the things He has made.

The Progress and Results of Apostasy

21 And although men knew that God exists, yet they did
not acknowledge Him as such, nor did they give Him
thanks. Rather, they busied themselves with silly speculations
about Him, and their stupid minds groped about in the dark.
22To be sure, they claimed to be wise, but they were fools.
23So they exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for
images in the likeness of corruptible man, and of birds, four-
footed beasts and reptiles.

24 That is why God gave them up to impurity, letting
them follow the desires of their hearts and to degrade their
own bodies among themselves. 25They claimed that God's
Word was a lie, and they worshiped and served the creation
rather than the Creator, who is blessed for ever, Amen!

26 God therefore abandoned them to degrading passions.
Even women exchanged their functions for practices con-
trary to nature. 27And men likewise, forsaking the natural

use of the woman, burned in lustful passion for one another, males with males practicing shameful vice and bringing upon themselves the consequences of their misdeeds.

28 They did not in their thinking want to recognize God any longer; therefore God gave them up to a mind that was degenerate, that loved to do what was wrong. 29They were full of every sort of wickedness, immorality, unrighteousness, covetousness and malice; also full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and ill-nature; gossips 30and slanderers, haters of God, insolent, proud, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents; 31likewise foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless and merciless. 32And although they are aware that God has decreed that all who do these things deserve to die, yet they not only do them, but they also approve when others do them.

CHAPTER 2

The Universality of Sin

MY friend, no matter who you are, you have no excuse for condemning others, for in condemning someone else you are also condemning yourself, for you are guilty of the same misdeeds yourself. 2We are sure, though, that when God judges in such matters, that judgment will be factual and impartial. 3When you are condemning another for what you yourself also do, do you think that you will escape God's judgment? 4How about God's rich kindness to you? And think of His patience and forbearance toward you. Do you ignore the fact that God's kindness should lead you to a change of heart?

5 By your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath, when God will reveal the justice of His judgments. 6For He will award to every man according to his works. 7He will give everlasting life to those who, by perseverance in doing good, have sought

to attain glory, honor and immortality. [8]But on the contrary, to the self-willed who rebel against the truth but yield to lies, He will give wrath and fury. [9]Also affliction and anguish will be the lot of every human soul who has committed evil — to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. [10]And there will be glory, honor and peace to everyone who has done good — to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. [11]For God is impartial and treats everyone alike.

All Face the Judgment

12 Those who have sinned without knowledge of the law will perish without reference to the law, and those who had the law and sinned against it will be judged by the law. [13]For it is not the hearing of the law that makes a man righteous in God's sight, but rather it is his obedience to the law that justifies him. [14]When the Gentiles, who do not have the law, instinctively do what the law demands, they are as a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. [15]They prove that the demands of the law are written in their hearts. It is their conscience that speaks to them, arguing a case, either condemning or justifying it. [16]This too will be considered on the day when God passes judgment on the secret thoughts of men, which, according to the Gospel that I preach, will be through Jesus Christ.

The Jews Preach But Do Not Practice

17 Well, you are a Jew by name and you feel secure in the law, and you boast of God. [18]And you know His will, and from your knowledge of the law you can appreciate the more excellent way. [19]You are sure that you are a guide to the blind, a light to those in the dark. [20]You admonish the foolish, and teach the children, for in the law you have the framework of knowledge and the essentials of truth.

21 But listen! Do you who can teach others, also teach yourself? Do you yourself steal while you preach against stealing? [22]You say that one must not commit adultery, but

are you yourself an adulterer? You abhor idolatry, but do you at the same time rob the heathen temples? [23]You boast about the law, but do you not dishonor God when you break it? [24]In fact, the Scriptures themselves declare, "Because of you, the name of God is dishonored among the heathen" (*Ezek.* 36:20).

25 Circumcision is truly a good thing if you keep the law, but if you break the law your circumcision becomes uncircumcision. [26]And if an uncircumcised man meets the requirements of the law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? [27]And so those who keep the law, though not circumcised in their body, can pass judgment on you who have kept the letter of the law by being circumcised but are otherwise law-breakers.

28 To be a Jew is really not just in the outward appearance. The same holds good for circumcision; it is really not just an outward operation of the body. [29]No, to be a real Jew is to be one from within. And similarly, a real circumcision is of the heart; it is spiritual, not physical. And such a one will get praise from God, even if not from men.

CHAPTER 3

The Chosen People Have Failed

WHAT advantage then, is there in being a Jew? And what value was there in circumcision? [2]The benefits were great, in all respects. In the first place, the Word of God was intrusted to the Jews. [3]Granted, that some of them did not accept it in faith. Can their lack of faith nullify God's faithful promises? [4]No, never! God will prove true, though every man may prove false! Scripture puts it this way, "You are shown to be true in Your words, and when You are being judged You are in the right" (*Psalm* 51:4).

5 But what shall we say if our unrighteousness simply serves to magnify God's righteousness? Shall we say (I am

using our daily speech) that it is wrong for God to punish us? [6]No, not at all! How else could God judge the world? [7]But if a falsehood of mine, placed by the side of God's truthfulness, brings out His glory, why must I be condemned as a sinner? [8]Why not, then, do evil that good may come? Actually, some have slanderously reported that we have said this, and others have accused us of so doing. The question justly deserves condemnation.

The Whole World Guilty Before God

9 What then? Are we Jews better than the rest? By no means. We have already stated that both Jews and Greeks are all under the curse of sin. [10]For Scripture says, "There is none righteous; no, not one. [11]No one understands; no one searches for God. [12]They have all strayed from the right way; they have all become corrupt. Not a single one practices kindness; no, not one. [13]Their throats are like open graves, they use their tongues to deceive, and behind their lips is the poison of asps. [14]Their mouths are full of curses and bitterness. [15]They run swiftly to shed blood. [16]Ruin and misery mark their ways. [17]And they know not the way of peace. [18]And no fear of God is kept before their eyes" (*Psalms* 5:9; 10:7; 14:1-3; 36:1; 140:3; *Proverbs* 1:16; *Isaiah* 59:7).

19 We know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law so that every mouth may be stopped and everyone in the world may realize his guilt before God. [20]No human being can be justified before Him simply by keeping the law. What the law does is to show us how sinful we are.

Justification by Faith Defined

21 God's plan of justification has been disclosed without any reference to the law, though the law and the prophets do make mention of it. [22]God's own way of making men righteous is by faith in Jesus Christ. This justification is for

all and upon all who believe, for no other requirement is made. [23]For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. [24]And all are justified freely, because of His grace through the salvation that is in Christ Jesus. [25]For God gave Him to us as a means of reconciliation if we would believe that He ransomed us with His blood. God has in this way demonstrated His own justice as well as His forbearance in passing over our former sins, [26]also by showing at the present time that He is a just God and that He justifies everyone who believes in Jesus.

27 What then, becomes of our vain human pride? It is outlawed. How? — by what fundamental law? By the law of works? No, it is ruled out by the law of faith. [28]We hold, therefore, that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the law at all. [29]Is God the God of Jews only? Is He not the God of the Gentiles also? Yes, of the Gentiles, too. [30]There is only one God. He will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith, and the uncircumcised also on the ground of their faith. [31]Do we, then, by faith nullify the law? Not at all; rather it strengthens the law.

CHAPTER 4

Illustrations of Justification

AS to Abraham, our ancestor after the flesh, what shall we say that he found? [2]For if Abraham was justified by his works, he had something to boast about, yet he could not do so before God. [3]What does Scripture say about him? It says that "Abraham believed God and that was credited to him as justification" (*Genesis* 15:6).

4 In case a man works, his pay is not considered a gift but an obligation. [5]But if a man has no good works to his credit but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accepted for justification. [6]David said as much when he described the happiness of the man who is justified by God,

apart from his works: [7]"Blessed is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. [8]Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not record any sin" (*Psalm* 32:1, 2).

Faith vs. Ordinances

9 Is this happiness, then, for the circumcised only, or for the uncircumcised as well? In the case of Abraham we have heard that it was his faith that brought his justification. [10]When was he justified? Was it after he had been circumcised, or was it while he was still uncircumcised? It was not after he was circumcised, but before. [11]He received circumcision as a sign, or token, of the justification he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised, thus to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised but who nevertheless receive justification. [12]And, likewise, he was made to be the father of those who are not only circumcised, but who are also believers such as father Abraham was even before he was circumcised.

Faith vs. Legalism

13 The promise made to Abraham and his descendants — that they should possess the earth — was given, not because of their keeping the law, but because of justification by faith. [14]For if those who live under the law are to be the heirs, then faith has no value and the promise means nothing. [15]For where there is law there is wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.

16 It all depends, then, on faith in the promise made as a matter of grace and guaranteed to all of Abraham's posterity, not only to those who hold to the law, but also to those who have a faith like Abraham's. He is the father of us all. [17]So it is written, too, "I have made you a father of many nations." This promise was made because he believed God, who can restore the dead to life and can call into be-

ing things that do not exist. [18]So Abraham kept on hoping when hope had failed, for he believed that he was to become the father of many nations, as he had been promised, "So shall your seed be."

Abraham a Type of Faith

19 Even when he was about a hundred years old, being as good as dead, and even though Sarah was far too old to bear children, his faith did not weaken. [20]He did not through unbelief question God's promise, but remained strong in the faith, giving glory to God. [21]He was absolutely certain that God was able to do what He had promised to do. [22]Therefore, this faith was counted to him for justification.

23 But this "counted to him for justification," was not written for his sake only. [24]These words apply also to us. They will be applied to us if we believe in Him who raised our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead. [25]Christ died for our sins, and He was raised again for our justification.

CHAPTER 5

The Seven Results of Justification

THEREFORE, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2]Through Him, by faith, we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of beholding the glory of God.

3 And not only that, but we rejoice also in our present sufferings, knowing that suffering gives us more endurance. [4]Endurance, in turn, leads to tested character, and character gives hope. [5]This hope will not bring shame or disappointment to us, for God has poured into our hearts His love through the Holy Spirit that He sends upon us. [6]We were entirely helpless when Christ, in His appointed time, died for sinners.

7 It is rare to find anyone willing to die for another, even
for a good man, although there are perhaps cases when some-
one has ventured to do so. [8]But God proves His love for us
in this — that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
9 All the more surely, since we have been reconciled by
His blood, we shall be saved by Him from God's wrath.
[10]For if, when we were His enemies, we were reconciled to
God through the death of His Son, surely now that we are
reconciled, we shall be saved by His life in us. [11]And in
addition to reconciliation, we also rejoice in God through
our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom we owe our reconciliation.

The Two Adams Contrasted

12 It was through one man that sin came into the world,
and death through sin. And so death spread to all men, in-
asmuch as all men had sinned. [13]That is, sin had come into
the world before the law was given, but sin is not put to ac-
count where there is no law, [14]except that death reigned all
the way from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not
sinned in the same way as Adam. And Adam foreshadowed
One who was to come.

15 But is the free gift of grace in proportion to Adam's
transgression? No, for it is this way: By one man's trans-
gression many died, but much more richly has God's grace
come to many through God's gift of grace, namely, the Man,
Jesus Christ. [16]Nor is the free gift like the effect of that one
man's sin. It is true that the judgment following the sin was
a death sentence, but the free gift, although following a
great many transgressions, brings justification. [17]For if
through that one man's offense death reigns over all, much
more will God's abundant mercy and His gift of sanctifica-
tion reign in the lives of those who receive it through that
one other Man, Jesus Christ.

18 Well then, just as one man's sin has led to condemna-
tion for all men, so also another Man's righteousness leads
to justification and life for all men. [19]For just as through

the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of another Man many will be made righteous. [20]When the law was given, the result was that trespasses were on the increase, but even where sin abounded grace surpassed it. [21]So that, just as when sin reigned, death was the result, so also when grace reigns, everlasting life is the result through justification by Jesus Christ, our Lord.

CHAPTER 6

Resurrection, Union With Christ

NOW, what shall we say? Shall we keep on sinning, so as to give more room for grace? [2]Surely not! Since we have died to sin, how can we endure living in it? [3]Do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? [4]In baptism, therefore, we were buried with Him into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too should walk in newness of life. [5]For if we were united with Him, as it were, by sharing His death, then we shall share His resurrection also and live with Him!

6 This we know, that our old sinful self was crucified with Christ, and so the power of sin over us was destroyed in order that we should no longer be slaves of sin. [7]A dead man is no longer bothered by sin; he is freed. [8]And if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him. [9]We understand that Christ rose from the dead; He will never die again. Death has no more dominion over Him. [10]The death He died was because of sin, and once for all. And the life He now lives, He lives for God.

Counting the Old Life As Dead

11 So you also must think of yourselves as having died because of sin, but you have been restored to life again to

serve God in Christ Jesus. [12]Therefore, do not allow sin to rule over your mortal bodies and make you slaves of your lusts. [13]Do not permit any organ of your body to be an instrument of sin, but rather offer yourselves to God as men brought back from death to life, and let Him use the parts of your body as His instruments of righteousness. [14]Don't let sin be your master. You are now not under the law, but under grace.

Redemption Through Christ

15 What then? Shall we sin because we are under grace and not under law? No, never! [16]Don't you know that when you submit to someone as master and obey him, you become his slave? This is so, whether it be in some act of sin which leads to death, or whether it is in obedience to God which leads to righteousness. [17]But thank God, though you were once the slaves of sin, you now give wholehearted obedience to His standard of teaching which you were taught.

Freedom Through Christ

18 This has set you free from the slavery of sin and has made you slaves of righteousness instead. [19]I use the language of daily life because human nature is still strong in you. So, just as you at one time yielded your powers to the slavery of impurity and lawlessness, always getting worse and worse, so now you dedicate your powers to the service of righteousness and sanctification.

20 When you were slaves of sin, you had no claim to righteousness. [21]And what did you gain from those things of which you are now ashamed? The result of those things is death. [22]But now you are the slaves of God, set free from sin, and the result you gain is sanctification here, and at the end, everlasting life. [23]For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is everlasting life together with Christ Jesus, our Lord.

CHAPTER 7

Death Frees Us from the Law

DO you not know, brethren — I am speaking to those who know something of the law — that the law rules a man's actions only during his lifetime? [2]Thus, by the law, a married woman is bound to her husband while he is alive. Then, if the husband dies, the law sets her free from him. [3]Accordingly, if she marries another man while her husband is still living, she would be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, the law sets her free and she would not be an adulteress if she married some other man.

4 My brethren, your situation is quite similar. Through the body of Christ, you are no longer under the law, so that you may now belong to Another; yes, to Him who was raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. [5]On the other hand, while we were living worldly lives, our sinful passions — aroused by what is sin under the law — were operating in our bodies to bring a harvest of death. [6]But now we are released from the law, and having died to what held us in its grip, so we are free to serve God in newness of spirit, and not in the old way according to the letter of the law.

Holiness Not Obtained Through the Law

7 Now, what shall we say? That the law is sin? Not at all! But it was the law that made clear my knowledge of sin. For example, I should not have been aware of covetousness if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." [8]The law gave sin occasion to express itself, and in my own case it stimulated all sorts of covetousness. But without the law, sin is lifeless.

9 There was a time when I, too, did not have the law, and I was, so to speak, "alive." Then the law came to me and sin came to life — and I "died." [10]The very command-

ment which was intended to bring life, actually proved to be a sentence of death to me. [11]The commandment gave sin a chance, and sin deceived me and caused my death.

12 Again I say, the law is holy — each commandment of it is holy and just and good. [13]Was it this good thing that brought death to me? No, indeed! It was sin that did it, and the purpose was that sin might be recognized as sin. It brought death to me through something that was good, and thus through the good commandment sin becomes exceedingly sinful. [14]We know that the law is spiritual; it is I who am sensual, sold to the slavery of sin.

The Strife of the Two Natures

15 Therefore I am not master of what I do. I do things that I do not want to do. In fact, I do the very things that I hate to do. [16]I acknowledge that the law is right by the fact that I do what I do not want to do. [17]It is not really I, myself, who am doing this, but sin that holds sway over me. [18]For I know that in me — that is, in my flesh — there dwells nothing good. I sometimes want to do what is right, but do not have the power. [19]Instead of doing the good that I want to do, I do the evil that I do not want to do.

20 But since I do not do what I want to do, it is sin that dwells in me that does it, and not I. [21]This, then, is what I find. The law works this way: When I want to do right, evil is present with me. [22]In my inmost self I delight in the law of God. [23]But in my body I see another law, one that conflicts with the law of my mind, one that makes me a slave to the law of sin which is in my body.

24 What a miserable man I am! Who can free me from my own sinful body? [25]I thank God that it has been done through Jesus Christ our Lord! Of myself, with my mind I am a servant of the law of God; but in my flesh I am slave to the law of sin.

CHAPTER 8

Righteousness Through the New Law of the Spirit

THERE is, therefore, no death sentence hanging over those who are in Christ Jesus, for they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. [2]I have been set free from the law of sin and death by the law of the Spirit of life through Christ Jesus. [3]The law was made powerless to save because it was made weak by our sinful nature. But God sent his own Son, with a body like that of sinful man, and, by being made a sacrifice for sin, He, in His own flesh, condemned sin. [4]In that way the just requirement of the law, through Him, was fulfilled for us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Conflict Between the Spirit and the Flesh

5 Those who walk according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, and those who walk according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. [6]But to set the mind on the flesh brings death, whereas to set the mind on the Spirit brings life and peace. [7]The mind which is interested only in carnal things is enmity to God. It does not obey God's law, and, of course, cannot. [8]Those who live after the flesh cannot possibly please God.

9 But if the Spirit of God truly dwells in you, then you are not carnal minded, but spiritual. No one is a Christian unless he has the Spirit of Christ in him. [10]Then if Christ is in you, your spirit lives because of justification, even though your body must die because of sin. [11]If the Spirit of God who raised up Jesus from the dead dwells in you, God, who raised up Christ Jesus from the dead, will also raise up your mortal bodies through that same Spirit who lives in you.

12 Brethren, we are by no means bound to follow the standards set by our fleshly natures. [13]For you must die if you live after the ways of the flesh, but, on the other hand,

if you live by the Spirit, the Spirit will put to death your carnal deeds and give you life!

The Sonship of the Regenerate

14 For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God. 15The Spirit which you have received is not of slavery, which leads you back to a life of fear, but rather that of sonship, which enables you to cry out, "Father! Father!" 16Yes, the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirits that we are God's children. 17And if we are children, then we are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ. That is, if we have a share in His sufferings, then we shall also in the same way have a part in His glorification.

The Whole Creation to Be Redeemed

18 It seems to me that the sufferings of the present can in no way compare with the glory that is to be shown us in the future. 19Everything created seems to be waiting for the revelation of the sons of God. 20The created world was subjected to failure, not because it wanted it that way, but because of Him who subjected it thus. He did so in hope. 21His hope was that creation itself would be made free from its bondage of corruption and have a part in the glorious freedom of God's children.

22 We are conscious, somehow, that all nature has been groaning in agony together till now. 23Not only so, but we who enjoy a foretaste of the Spirit also groan within ourselves as we wait for the resurrection of our bodies, and for our sonship with Him. 24When we were saved we had this hope. And remember, that hope which is seen is not hope. Does anyone hope for what he sees? 25But if we hope for what we do not see, then we must wait for it in patience.

26 In like manner, the Spirit also helps us in our helplessness. We do not know, for instance, what to pray for as we ought; then the Spirit intercedes for us in ways beyond

words. [27]And God, who searches the hearts of men, knows what the Spirit has in mind, for He intercedes for the saints according to God's will.

The Unfailing Purpose of God

28 We are certain, however, that all things work together for the good of those who love God. According to His purpose, they are the ones whom He calls. [29]It was His plan that they should conform to the likeness of His Son, so that He might be the First-born among many brethren. He foreknew this, and predestined it. [30]And those whom He predestined He also called. And those whom He called, He also justified. And those whom He justified, He also glorified.

31 What, then, shall we say about these things? Just this — If God is for us, what does it matter who may be against us? [32]For He did not spare His Own Son, but gave Him for us all; then will He not also give us all things with Him? [33]Who is going to bring charges against God's elect? It is God, Himself, who justifies. [34]Who is going to condemn? Christ, who died for us, is there to intercede for us. Yes, and He was raised again and now sits at the right hand of God. He pleads in our behalf.

35 Ah, who can separate us from Christ's love? Can tribulation do it? Or distress? Or persecution? Or famine? Or nakedness . . . peril . . . sword? No! [36]The Scripture does say, "For your name's sake we are being put to death the livelong day; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered" (*Psalm* 44:22). [37]And yet, despite all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. [38]And as for me, I am certain that nothing in death or life, in the present or future, among angels or spiritual powers, [39]or any height or depth, or any creature whatever will be able to separate us from God's love, which is ours in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

CHAPTER 9

The Spiritual Privilege of Israel

I AM telling the truth in Christ, and am not lying. In this my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit. [2]I have a great sorrow and the pain in my heart is unceasing. [3]Indeed, I could even wish that I myself might be sentenced to separation from Christ if that would help my brethren, my own blood relatives. [4]They are Israelites, God's chosen people. God gave them the glory, the covenants, the law, the temple service, and the promises. [5]The patriarchs are of their race, and even Christ, according to the flesh, and He is God over all, blessed for ever. Amen.

The Distinction Between Natural and Spiritual Israel

6 It is not, however, that the Word of God has failed. Not all the descendants of Israel are true Israelites. [7]And not all the descendants of Abraham are considered the children of Abraham, for the promise was, "Through Isaac shall your posterity be called." [8]This means that not those who are natural descendants are thereby counted as God's children, but only the children of the promise are counted. [9]Such a promise was the word, "About this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son" (*Genesis* 17:18-21).

10 And, again, a promise came to Rebecca when she was to have twins by our father Isaac. [11]The children were not yet born and they had as yet not done anything either good or bad. And yet God had made an election and wanted His purpose to stand. It was not based on their works, but on His own choice. [12]He said to her, "The elder shall serve the younger." [13]Scripture also put it this way, "I loved Jacob, but I repudiated Esau" (*Malachi* 1:2).

The Justice and Mercy of God

14 Now, what shall we conclude? That God is unjust?

That cannot be! [15]For He said to Moses, "I will have mercy on anyone I choose to show mercy, and will take pity on anyone I want to pity." [16]God's mercy, then, is not on account of man's will or his readiness, but is a matter of God's choice. [17]Just so, Scripture tells that He spoke to Pharaoh, "I have raised you to high position for the reason that I want to show My power in dealing with you, so that My name may be made known throughout the world." [18]So He shows mercy to whomever He chooses, and He hardens the heart of anyone He chooses.

19 And now you ask, "Why does He still find fault?" Who of us, by resisting, can change His purpose? [20]But, sir, who are you to find fault with God? Shall that which is made say to its maker, "Why did you make me so?" [21]Certainly the potter has the right to make two different objects out of the same lump of clay, the one for distinguished service and the other for menial use. [22]At times, God is willing to show His wrath and make His power known, yet He endures long and patiently with the objects of wrath who are fit for description. [23]He does this in order to make clear to those who are the objects of His mercy, how rich is the glory that He has already prepared for them. [24]Yes, even we are objects of His mercy, Jews and Gentiles alike, as many as He has called.

Mercy to the Gentiles Prophesied

25 In Hosea He says, "I will call them 'My people' who are not My people, and she who was not loved will be called 'Beloved!' [26]And in the place where it was said, 'You are not My people,' they will be called 'Sons of the living God' " (*Hosea* 2:23; 1:10). [27]Isaiah cries out about Israel, "Though the number of Israel is as the sand of the sea, yet only a remnant will be saved. [28]For the Lord will carry out His orders on the earth, concluding each matter with justice and efficiency" (*Isaiah* 10:22, 23). [29]Isaiah had also said earlier,

"If the Lord of Hosts had not left us offspring we would have become like Sodom; we would have fared like Gomorrah" (*Isaiah* 1:9).

30 What shall we conclude? That the Gentiles, though not seeking justification, obtained justification; that is, they attained justification by faith. 31But Israel, on the other hand, though seeking justification by law, did not obtain justification. 32Why not? Because they tried to attain it by the works of the law and not by faith. They stumbled over the stone of stumbling. 33This is foretold in Scripture, "See! I place in Zion a stone of stumbling, a rock of offense. But everyone who believes on Him shall not be put to shame" (*Psalm* 118:22; *Isaiah* 8:14).

CHAPTER 10

Self-Righteousness the Cause for Rejection of Israel

BRETHREN, it is my heart's desire and my prayer to God for Israel, that they may be saved. 2That they have a zeal for God, I know from experience, but they lack certain knowledge. 3They are densely ignorant about God's way of justification and, while they try to earn justification in their own way, they will not submit to God's way of becoming justified. 4The end of the struggle for justification by law is Christ, and it comes to everyone who believes on Him.

Righteousness by Faith the Gift of God

5 Moses does not say, concerning justification by law, that if a man does what the law commands, he will live. 6But the way of getting justification by faith is different. It speaks thus: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who shall go up to heaven?' — that is, to bring Christ down; 7or, 'Who shall descend into hell?' — that is, to bring Him back from the dead." 8But what does it say? It says, "The Word is near

you, in your mouth, and in your heart." That is the Word of faith which we preach: [9]"If you will say with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." [10]For with the heart we believe to righteousness, and with the mouth we make confession to salvation. [11]For it is said in Scripture, "No one who believes on Him shall be put to shame."

The Necessity of World-Wide Preaching

12 In this there is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile. They all have the same Lord, and He bestows His riches upon all who call on Him. [13]And everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.

14 But how can people call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in One of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without a preacher? [15]And how can they preach unless they are sent to do it? Scripture says, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the glad news of good things!" (*Isaiah* 52:7).

16 Still, they have not all accepted the glad news, even as Isaiah said, "Lord, who has believed our message?" [17]So, faith comes by hearing a message, and the message must be from the Word of Christ. [18]Now, I ask, have the people not heard? Yes, indeed, they have. "Their voices were heard in the whole earth, and their words to the very ends of the habitable world" (*Psalm* 19:4). [19]And again I ask, did not Israel understand? I will let Moses answer first. He says, "I will let a people that is not a nation make you jealous, and I will let a foolish people make you angry" (*Deut.* 32:21). [20]And next, let Isaiah speak. He is very bold when he says, "I have been found by some who were not looking for me, and have made myself known to some who were not seeking to know me"; [21]But about Israel he says, "All day long I have stretched out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people!" (*Isaiah* 65:1, 2).

CHAPTER 11

A Remnant of Israel Saved

AGAIN, I ask, has God rejected His people? God forbid! I, too, am an Israelite. I am a descendant of Abraham and a member of the tribe of Benjamin. 2No, God has not disowned His people whom He had chosen. Don't you know what the Scripture says about Elijah, how he pleaded with God against Israel? 3"Lord," he said, "they have killed Your prophets and broken down Your altars. I alone am left and they seek to take my life." 4But what did God say to him in reply? "I still have seven thousand men," He said. "They are reserved for Myself and not one of them has bent a knee to Baal" (*1 Kings* 19:10).

5 It is that way today, too. A remnant has been saved, chosen by grace. 6So if it is by grace, then it is not at all by works. Otherwise, grace would not be grace, for, in that case, works would not be works.

Israel's Loss, the Gentiles Gain

7 Now what? What Israel was seeking, they did not get. Only the chosen remnant got it, while the rest were hardened. 8Scripture also says, "God gave them an attitude of stupor, eyes that are blind and ears that are deaf, even to this day" (*Isaiah* 29:10). 9And David said, "Let their feasting be to them a snare, a trap, a stumbling block, and a punishment. 10Let their eyes be dimmed, so that they may not see, and keep their backs bent forever" (*Psalm* 69:22).

Conversion of Gentiles Spurs Jews to Faith

11 I ask, then, have they stumbled and fallen away entirely? May that never be! On the contrary, by their offense salvation has come to the Gentiles, too, so as to provoke the Jews to jealousy. 12And again, if their transgression has

made the world richer and their defeat has made the Gentiles richer, how much more good would their full consecration do!

13 Now, I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. As an apostle to the Gentiles, I attach great importance to my ministry. 14Also, if in any way I can thereby awaken my own people to interest, at least some of them may be saved. 15True, their rejection has meant the reconciliation of the world, so what will their final acceptance mean, unless it be life from the dead? 16If the first part of the dough is made holy, then the whole lump is holy; and if the root of a tree is dedicated to holiness, then the branches are also holy.

The Symbolical Olive Trees — Hope for the Jews

17 Suppose, now, that some of the branches have been broken off and that you, a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in as one of them; then you have a share in the root and the fatness of that olive tree. 18So do not start to boast over against the other branches. Remember, if you should boast against them, that you do not support the root but the root supports you.

19 But rather say, "Some branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20Very well, they were broken off because of lack of faith. So you must not be proud; you ought rather to be fearful, 21for if God did not spare the tree's own natural branches, neither will He spare you. 22Consider carefully both God's kindness and severity. His severity is against those who fell away, and His kindness is toward you, but only as long as you continue in His grace; otherwise you, too, will be cut off. 23They also will be grafted back in again if they do not continue in their unbelief, for God can graft them in again. 24You were taken from an olive tree, wild by nature; and, contrary to nature, you were grafted upon a tame olive tree. How much easier it will be to graft the natural branches back into their parent olive tree.

The Final Conversion of Israel

25 Now, brethren, there is a mystery of which I do not want you to be ignorant, for otherwise you might think too highly of yourselves. It is this — a hardening has come upon Israel in part, and it will last until the full number of the Gentiles has been called in. 26So all Israel will be saved, according to the Scripture prophecy, "The Saviour will come out of Zion. He will rid Jacob of his ungodliness. 27Yes, this will be My covenant with them, when I take away their sins." (*Isaiah* 59:20, 21; *Jer.* 31:33.)

28 As regards the Gospel, they are indeed considered the enemies of God, on your account; but as regards election, they are still beloved on their fathers' account. 29For the gifts and calling of God are unchangeable.

The Divine Plan of Salvation

30 You were once disobedient to God, but now you have had mercy shown you because of their disobedience. 31Just so they, too, though now disobedient, may have mercy shown them because of the mercy shown you. 32For God has reckoned that all men are disobedient, so that He might show mercy to all.

A Concluding Doxology

33 Oh, how inexhaustible are the riches of God's wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable are His judgments, and how untraceable His ways! 34For who has ever known the thoughts of the Lord, and who has ever been His counselor? 35Or who was ever the first to give to Him in order to have Him pay back? 36For everything comes from Him, everything exists through Him, and everything exists for Him! To Him be the glory forever! Amen.

CHAPTER 12

Our Bodies a Living Sacrifice

BRETHREN, 1 urge you, therefore, because of God's compassion, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. That would be a reasonable service. [2]Do not live according to the fashions of the times, but be transformed from within by the renewing of your minds. Try to prove in practice what is the will of God, and what is good, acceptable and perfect.

The Christian's Duties to the Church

3 Through the grace that has been given me, I want to tell each one of you not to think too highly of himself, but rather to be sober-minded and to judge himself by the amount of faith that God has given him. [4]In a body there are many parts, and all these parts do not have the same work to do. [5]So also in the church, though we are many, we form one body in Christ, each one of us being a part of the whole and mutually dependent on the other parts. [6]Each one of us, then, is different and has special talents according to the grace that was given to us. If, for example, our gift is prophecy, let us use it according to the measure of our faith. [7]Or if the gift is some ministry, then faithfulness in that ministry is required; if it is teaching, then this talent must be used. [8]In the same way, the speaker must exhort, the giver must give without display, the office-holder must be faithful, and the charity-worker must do his work with cheerfulness.

The Christian's Duties to His Fellow Men

9 Let your love be sincere. You must abhor what is wicked and hold fast to what is good. [10]Be affectionate toward one another in brotherly love, each one eager to show honor to another. [11]Don't let your zeal slow down; be afire

with the Spirit; serve the Lord. [12]Rejoice in your hope; be steadfast in time of trouble; keep on praying. [13]Help the saints in their need; always practice hospitality.

14 Bless those who persecute you. Do not curse them, but bless them. [15]Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. [16]Live in harmony together. Avoid being haughty; mingle with the lowly; don't be conceited. [17]Repay no one evil for evil; do what is right in the sight of all men. [18]If possible, insofar as you can, live at peace with all men.

19 Friends, do not seek revenge, but let God handle it, for it is written, "Vengeance belongs to Me, and I will repay, says the Lord." [20]But rather do this — feed your enemy if he is hungry; give him something to drink if he is thirsty. For in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. [21]Do not let evil conquer you, but you must conquer evil with good.

CHAPTER 13

The Christian's Duties to the State, Even If Pagan

EVERYONE must obey the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God and the existing authorities exist as having been appointed by God. [2]If anyone sets himself against the authority over him, he really sets himself against a plan that God has ordained, and those who resist will bring down judgment upon themselves.

3 Rulers are not a terror to those who do good, but to those who do evil. So, if you want to live without fear of the authorities, do good and you will get praise for so doing. [4]The ruler is God's servant, for your good. Then if you do wrong you have reason to fear, for he does not carry a sword just for show. No, as a servant of God, he has to inflict just punishment on the evil-doer. [5]One must, therefore, be subject to the authorities, not only to avoid God's wrath but also because of one's conscience.

6 For the same reason you pay taxes, too, because the
authorities are God's servants who attend to this very thing.
7So pay all of them their dues — taxes to whom taxes are
due, tariff to whom tariff is due, respect to those who should
be respected, honor to those entitled to it.

The Christian's Duties to the World in General

8 Owe no one anything except to love him, for he who
loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. 9The command-
ments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill,
You shall not steal, You shall not covet . . ." and the other
commandments are all summed up in the statement, "You
shall love your neighbor as yourself." 10Love works no
wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the
law.

11 And one thing more, since we know that the times are
critical, it is high time for you to wake up from sleep, for
final deliverance is now nearer to us than when we first be-
came believers. 12The night is far gone and dawn is at hand.
Let us, therefore, cast off the deeds of darkness and put on
the armor of light. 13Let us behave ourselves properly, as in
the light of day. Let us not carry on in carousing and drunk-
enness, in immorality and excesses, in quarreling and jeal-
ousy. 14 But put on the armor of the Lord Jesus Christ, and
do not think of gratifying the lusts of the flesh.

CHAPTER 14

Restrictions on Christian Freedom

IF there is someone who is weak in the faith, re-
ceive him kindly and do not argue about his personal views.
2One man's faith may permit him to eat anything, while a
man of weaker faith feels himself limited to vegetables. 3Let
not the one who eats anything despise the vegetarian, and
let not the abstainer criticize him who eats freely, for God

has received him. [4]Who are you to condemn someone else's servant? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. Why should he not succeed? For God is able to make him stand.

5 One man thinks that one day is greater than another, while another esteems every day alike. Let each one decide the matter in his own mind. [6]He who observes the day should observe it in the Lord's honor. It is just so with regard to eating. Either one eats in the Lord's honor and thanks God for the food; or one abstains from eating certain foods, also in the Lord's honor, and he, too, gives thanks to God.

Wise Withholding of Judgment

7 None of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. [8]For when we live, we live to the Lord, and when we die, we die to the Lord. That is, both when we live and when we die, we are the Lord's. [9]That was why Christ died and rose again, that He might be Lord over both the dead and the living.

10 Why, then, should you condemn your brother? Or why should you despise your brother? For we shall all have to stand some day before the judgment seat of God. [11]As to this, Scripture says, " 'As I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee shall bend before Me and every tongue shall make confession to God' " (*Isaiah* 45:23). [12]It is to God that each one of us must give an account of himself.

All Things Not Expedient

13 Let us, therefore, stop criticizing one another, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or a trap in the way of a brother. [14]I know, and am convinced in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. Nevertheless, it is unclean to the man who thinks of it as unclean. [15]If you grieve your brother because of meat, you do not walk according to the rule of love. Do not, by your use of food, bring ruin on one for whom Christ died. [16]Don't let that

which seems good to you become a subject of reproach. [17]Surely, the kingdom of God is not a matter of what to eat and what to drink, for it is justification and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. [18]He who serves Christ in these things finds favor with God and is approved also by men.

Christian Peace and Edification

19 We should, therefore, do the things that make for peace and for strengthening one another. [20]Don't destroy the work of God for the sake of meat. Even though all things are clean, still it is wrong for a man to make others fall because of what he eats. [21]The right thing to do is not to eat flesh nor to drink wine, nor to do anything that makes your brother stumble or that offends and weakens him. [22]As to your faith, hold fast to it, as before God. Happy is the man who need not find fault with himself for what he approves. [23]But if he has misgivings, as in eating, he is condemned if he eats, because it was not an act of faith. For everything that does not rest on faith is sin.

CHAPTER 15

Union in Christ Through Self-Denial

IT is the duty of us who are strong to bear with the scruples of those who are weak, and not to insist on pleasing ourselves. [2]Let each of us try to please his neighbor for his good, building up his faith. [3]Christ surely did not please Himself, for the Scriptures say, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on Me." [4]Words like these were written long ago for our instruction, in order that through our steadfastness and the encouragement that the Scriptures give, we may have hope.

Union in Christ Through Like-Mindedness

5 May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another, in accord with

Christ Jesus! 6Then you may unitedly with one voice glorify God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7Therefore receive one another as Christ received you, to the glory of God.

Union in Christ Through Christian Ministry

8 I maintain that Christ became a minister to the circumcised for the sake of God's truthfulness, so as to make good the promises to the fathers. 9I would also urge the Gentiles to praise God for His mercy. Thus it is written, "Because of this, I will confess You among the Gentiles, and Your name I will praise." 10Once more, it says, "Be happy, O Gentiles, together with His people!" 11And again, "Let every nation praise the Lord, let every people praise Him!" 12And again, in the words of Isaiah, "The root of Jesse shall come. He shall rise up to rule the Gentiles. And in Him shall the Gentiles hope!" (*Psalm* 18:49; *Deuteronomy* 32:43; *Psalm* 117:1; *Isaiah* 11:1, 10).

13 May the God of hope fill you now with every joy and peace in believing, so that you may have hope in abundance, through the power of the Holy Spirit!

Paul's Reason for Writing

14 My brethren, as far as you are concerned, for my part I am convinced that you are very good-hearted, that you are well informed spiritually, and that you are qualified to instruct one another. 15Still, on some points I have ventured to write to you rather boldly as a sort of reminder, because of the grace that God gave me to do this. 16It was He who made me a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. My priestly office is, then, to preach God's Gospel so as to make the Gentiles an acceptable offering, consecrated by the Holy Spirit.

17 I have reason, therefore, in Christ Jesus, to boast of the things pertaining to God. 18But I will not make bold to speak of anything except what Christ has done through me, by word and work, to win over the Gentiles. 19From Jeru-

salem and round about, as far out as Illyricum, I have preached the full Gospel of Christ, also by signs and wonders, and by the power of the Holy Spirit. [20]I have made it a point not to preach the Gospel where Christ has already been preached, so as not to build on some other man's foundation. [21]Just as it is written, "They shall see, to whom no news about Him had so far come; yes, they who have not heard of Him shall understand" (*Isaiah* 52:15). [22]This is also one reason why, on many occasions, I have been prevented from coming to you.

Paul's Future Plans

23 But now since I have no further work in these parts, and since I have longed for many years to visit you, [24]I will come to see you when I go to Spain, hoping to meet you when I pass that way. Also, I hope that you will speed me on my way after I shall have been strengthened by you in some measure.

25 But first I must go to Jerusalem, to bring aid to the saints there. [26]For Macedonia and Greece were happy to make a contribution to the needy saints in Jerusalem. [27]They were pleased to do it, I say, because they are indebted to them. For since the Gentiles had been given a share in their spiritual riches, they ought, in return, to minister to them in their temporal needs.

28 As soon as I have finished this errand and have placed the gift safely in their hands, I shall start off for Spain, stopping with you on the way. [29]I know that when I come to you I shall come in the fulness of Christ's blessing.

30 Still, I beg of you, brethren, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the spirit, to strive together with me in prayer to God on my behalf. [31]Pray that I may be kept safe from the unbelievers in Judea, and that my ministry in Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints there. [32]Pray that by God's will I may come to you with joy, and that I may be refreshed in your company. [33]And the God of peace be with you all! Amen.

CHAPTER 16

Miscellaneous Matters

I RECOMMEND to you our sister Phoebe, who
is a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae. [2]Make her welcome in the Lord, in a manner worthy of the saints, and give her any help that she may need from you. She herself has helped many, including myself.

3 Remember me to Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. [4]They once risked their lives to save mine. Not only I, but also all the Gentile churches, owe them thanks. [5]Remember me also to the church that meets at their house.

And greet my well beloved Epaenetus, who was the first Christian convert in the province of Asia (Greece). [6]Greet Mary, who has worked so hard for you. [7]Give my greetings also to Andronicus and Junias (Junia), my kinsmen and fellow prisoners. They are men of note among the missionaries, and accepted Christ before I did.

8 Give my love to Amplias, who is dear to me in the Lord. [9]Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my good friend. [10]Give my love to Apelles, approved in Christ's service. Salute those of the household of Aristobulus. [11]Likewise Herodion, a relative of mine, and those in the house of Narcissus, who are followers of the Lord.

12 Give my regards to Tryphaena and Tryphosa, workers for the Lord. Also to beloved Persis, who has done much work for the Lord. [13]Greet also Rufus, one of God's elect, and his mother, who has been a mother to me, too.

14 And greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, and the other brethren who are with them. [15]Remember me to Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. [16]Give one another a holy kiss. All the Christian churches greet you in love.

Warning Against False Teachers

17 And I appeal to you, brethren, to be on the lookout
for those who cause dissensions and offenses contrary to the
doctrines you have been taught. Take your stand against
them. 18For such are not servants of our Lord Jesus Christ,
but of their own desires. By their honeyed words and flat-
tery they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

19 Your loyalty to the Word has come to the attention
of us all, for which I am truly glad. It is my wish for you
that you may be wise in what is good and immune to what
is evil.

Conclusion

20 The God of peace will before long crush Satan under
your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!
Amen.

21 Timothy, my fellow worker, sends you greetings. Lu-
cius, Jason, and Sosipater do the same.

22 Also I, Tertius, who has written this epistle, greet you
in the name of the Lord. 23There are also greetings to you
from Gaius, my host, with whom the congregation meets.
And Erastus, the city treasurer, and Quartus, a brother, want
to be remembered to you. 24The grace of the Lord Jesus
Christ be with you! Amen.

25 Now can God build you up by my Gospel even as by
the preaching of Christ, which makes plain the mystery that
has been obscure for ages. 26And since this has been dis-
closed, in harmony with the Scripture prophecies, it is to be
preached at the command of the everlasting God to all the
nations for the sake of obedience of faith. 27To Him, then,
the only wise God, be glory for ever and ever! Amen.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

THIS letter is from Paul, who, by the will of God, was called as an apostle of Jesus Christ, and also from Sosthenes, a brother. [2]It is written to the church of God at Corinth, that is, it is to you who have been made holy through Jesus Christ, and who have thus been called to be saints, and it is meant for everyone anywhere who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is their Lord as well as ours. [3]Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

The Corinthian Position in Grace

4 I always thank God on your account because of His grace to you in Jesus Christ. [5]You have been enriched in everything through Him, in fullness of knowledge and power of expression. [6]This shows that my witness of Christ among you has been confirmed in your lives. [7]And so now you are not lacking any spiritual gift while you wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. [8]He will see to it that you will be able to hold out to the end, and be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. [9]Yes, God, who has called you into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, is faithful.

The Corinthian Church Divided Into Factions

10 Brethren, I beg of you to come to an understanding on every issue, and that you do not split up into factions. You should then have complete agreement, having the same purpose and the same judgment. [11]But it has been reported to me, my brethren, by members of Chloe's household, that there is much quarreling among you. [12]And each one belongs to a faction, and says, "I am for Paul"; or, "I am for Apollos"; or, "I am for Cephas"; or, "I am for Christ." [13]Was Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in Paul's name?

14 I am thankful to God that I did not baptize any one
of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15so no one can say that
you were baptized in my name. 16I did baptize also the mem-
bers of Stephanas' family, but beyond that I cannot recall
that I baptized anyone else among you. 17The reason is that
Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel;
and to do so without a show of learning and oratory, else
the cross of Christ might be robbed of its meaning and power.

18 Those on the way to destruction regard the story of
the cross as pure nonsense, whereas those of us who are on
the way to salvation regard it as the power of God.

Their Exultation in Human Wisdom

19 For Scripture says, "I will destroy the wisdom of the
wise and reject the learning of the learned." 20Where is your
scholar? Where is your scribe, learned in the law? Where is
your man today who can dispute and debate? Has not God
shown that the wisdom of this world is utter folly? 21How
so? The world by all its learning never came to know God,
but God in His wisdom was pleased to save by the "foolish-
ness of preaching" all those who believe.

22 We know that the Jews demand signs, and the Greeks
seek wisdom, 23but we preach Christ crucified, which is a
stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Gentiles
(Greeks). 24But to those who have been called, both Jews
and Greeks alike, Christ is the power and wisdom of God.
25So God's "foolishness" is wiser than man's wisdom, and
God's "weakness" is stronger than man's strength.

God's Wisdom vs. Human Wisdom

26 Now consider, brethren, how it was when the Lord
called you. Not many of you were wise in a worldly sense.
Not many of you wielded power. Not many of you were of
noble birth. 27Indeed not, for God chose rather what the
world considers foolish so that He might put the wise to

shame. And God chose what the world considers weak, so as to put the strong to shame. [28]And God chose people of humble birth and despised of men, even things that were not, so as to bring to nothing things that are. [29]Therefore, no human being can boast of anything in God's presence.

30 You are now His children through Christ Jesus. God made Him to be our wisdom and our justification, our sanctification, and our salvation. [31]Therefore, as Scripture says, "If a man would boast, let him boast in the Lord."

CHAPTER 2

Paul's Gospel from God, Not from Himself

So when I came to preach God's message to you, brethren, I did not come with pretensions to eloquence or learning. [2]For I had decided that while I was with you I would speak of nothing except Jesus Christ, the crucified One. [3]In fact, when I was with you I was timid and afraid, even trembling. [4]And I spoke and preached without enticing words or show of learning, but I tried to demonstrate that the Spirit has power. [5]I did this in order that your faith might rest on God's power rather than on human wisdom.

6 There is, of course, a wisdom that true believers have, and this we expound, but it is not the wisdom of these times nor of the leaders of this age, doomed as they are to be set aside as naught. [7]On the contrary, the message that we proclaim is God's wisdom, hitherto a mystery and kept secret until now, but which God had intended for our glory before time began. [8]It is a message that not one of the leaders of this world knew about, for if they had known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. [9]Truly, as Scripture says, "For those who love Him, God has prepared things no eye has ever seen and no ear ever heard, and no human heart ever conceived" (*Isaiah* 64:4).

God's Revelations Are for Spiritual Men

10 These things God has revealed to us by His Spirit, for
the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God Him-
self. 11For who can best know the things about a man, except
the man's own spirit that is within him? And just so, no one
can so understand the thoughts of God as can the Spirit of
God. 12We have received the Spirit of God, not the spirit of
the world, so that we may know the things that God has
given us.

13 And we tell and explain this mystery in words not
taught by human learning, but taught by the Spirit; that is,
we explain spiritual truths to those who have received the
Spirit. 14The worldly man does not accept the gifts from
God's Spirit, because they seem foolishness to him, and be-
cause he cannot understand them without help from the
Spirit. 15It is the spiritual man who can understand all spirit-
ual matters, even though he himself may not be understood
by anyone. 16For who has known the mind of the Lord, and
who can teach Him? Yet we share with Christ His thoughts.

CHAPTER 3

The Simplicity of Paul's Teaching

SO I had to approach you, not as spiritual men,
but as a worldly-minded set, at best not more than babies
in Christ. 2I gave you milk to drink, not meat to eat, for you
could not take it. Even now you are not strong enough for it.
3You are still too worldly. For when jealousy, quarrels and
divisions thrive among you, are you not worldly-minded and
carrying on like men of the world?

Christian Teachers Are God's Servants

4 When one of you says, "I am a follower of Paul," and
another says, "I am a follower of Apollos," are you not then
speaking like worldly men? 5Who is Apollos? And who is

Paul? Just servants through whom you have come to faith,
each doing the work that God allotted to him. 6I did the
planting, Apollos the watering, but God gave the growth.
7So neither he who plants nor he who waters counts for any-
thing, but only God, who gave the growth.

8 The planter and the waterer are alike, although each
will be paid according to his work. 9We are God's workmen
and you are God's field to be tilled, or God's building to be
erected. 10Like a skilled architect, I laid a foundation ac-
cording to the commission that God gave me, but someone
else is building on it. But let each one take care how he
builds on it. 11For this foundation is Jesus Christ, and He is
the only foundation on which anyone can build.

Two Kinds of Ministry and Their Results

12 Men may build on this foundation as with gold, silver
and precious stones, or with wood, grass and straw, 13and
each builder's workmanship will be made clear, for the judg-
ment day will disclose it. That day will come with fire, and
the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14If a
man has put up a building that stands firm, he will receive a
reward. 15But if the building is destroyed, that will be his
loss; yet he himself will be saved, but only as though he were
pulled out of the fire.

16 Don't you know that you are God's temple, and that
God's Spirit makes His home in you? 17If anyone defiles
God's temple God will bring him to ruin, for God's temple
is holy and you are that temple.

18 Let no one deceive himself. If anyone among you
thinks that he is wise in a worldly way, let him rather be-
come a fool in order to be truly wise. 19In God's sight, the
world's wisdom is foolishness. So Scripture says, "He catches
the wise men in their own quibbling." 20And again, "The
Lord knows the reasonings of the learned, that they are of
no account" (*Job* 5:13; *Psalm* 94:11).

21 Let no one, then, boast of men, because all things are
yours! 22Be it Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or
life and death, or the present and the future, it is all for you!
23And you belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God!

CHAPTER 4

Standards for Measuring Christian Service

MEN should look upon us as servants of Christ,
as stewards of the mysteries of God. 2And to sum it up, the
main requirement of a steward is that he be found faithful.
3With me, it is a very small matter that I should be judged
by you, or tried before a human court. I do not even pass
judgment on myself. 4For although my conscience does not
reprove me for anything, that does not mean that I am
innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. 5Therefore, do not
pass any premature judgments, but wait until the Lord comes
back. He will throw light on what is now hidden in dark-
ness, and He will reveal the motives in men's hearts. Every
man will then receive from God Himself the praise that is
his due.

The Example of the Apostles

6 Brethren, the reason why I have applied all this to my-
self and Apollos is that you may profit by it, that you may
learn from us not to go beyond what the Scriptures permit,
and that no one of you should boast of one person in pref-
erence to another. 7After all, who makes one superior to
another? Or, what is it that you have that has not been given
you? So if you have received it as a gift, why do you boast
as though you had earned it?

8 Are you already satisfied? Have you already become
rich? Have you already taken possession of your kingdom
without our help? I surely could wish that you now occu-
pied your thrones, and that we, too, might reign with you.

[9]Indeed, it seems to me that God has placed us apostles last and least among men, like men under sentence of death. Truly, we are a spectacle to the whole creation, to angels as well as men. [10]For Christ's sake we are fools, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we are in disrepute.

11 Up to the present moment, we have suffered hunger and thirst. We are poorly clad. We have been abused and beaten. We have no home. [12]We have worked hard with our hands for a living. When men revile us, we answer with a blessing; when they slander us, we just beg them to cease. [13]We are considered as worthless filth, the scum of the earth, to this very day.

Exhortation to Follow Paul

14 No, I am not writing these things to make you feel ashamed. Rather, I counsel you as my beloved children. [15]For even if you had had ten thousand Christian teachers, you have only one father. It was I who became your father in Jesus Christ when I preached the Gospel to you. [16]I plead with you, therefore, to follow my example. [17]It was for this reason that I sent to you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my walk in Christ Jesus, which is the same as I preach everywhere, in every church.

18 Some among you seem to think that I am never again going to visit you, and they have, therefore, become puffed up. [19]But I am coming to you again, and that very soon, God willing. Then I shall find out, not so much what these conceited ones say, as what they can do. [20]For God's kingdom does not consist of mere words, but of deeds to match them. [21]What is it you wish? Would you rather see me come with a stick in my hand, or with a loving, gentle spirit?

CHAPTER 5

Dealing With Immorality

IT is generally reported that immorality is practiced among you, such immorality as is not found even among the heathen. They say that one of you has taken to himself his father's wife. [2]And you seem to be proud of it, instead of being sorry about it and expelling from your membership the man who did this shameful deed. [3]For my part, I am present with you in spirit even though I am absent from you in body, and I have already passed sentence on the man who has done this, just as if I were present. [4]Therefore, call a meeting in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and I will be present with you in spirit by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ. [5]We would then hand this man over to Satan to be physically disciplined, in order that his spirit may be saved on the Day of the Lord.

6 It is not right that you boast about this case. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens the whole lump? [7]Therefore, clean out the old leaven, so that you may be as a lump of fresh dough, unleavened. For Christ, our Passover, has been sacrificed for us. [8]So let us celebrate the festival with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth, not with old leaven of vice and wickedness.

Dealing With Other Sins

9 In a letter I wrote that you should not associate with immoral people. [10]I did not mean that you should not have anything to do with those of the unchurched world who are immoral or greedy, extortioners or idolaters. For to do that, you would have to leave this world altogether. [11]No, I wrote to say that you must not associate with anyone who is a so-called Christian "brother," if he is immoral, or if he is a miser, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a swindler. One should not even eat with such a person.

12 What business have I to be judging outsiders? Is it not
for you to judge those within the church? 13And it is God
who judges those on the outside. In conclusion, expel the
wicked man from your congregation.

CHAPTER 6

Concerning Lawsuits Between Christians

HOW is it that when one of you has a grievance against another, he goes to law before a civil court and not before the saints? 2Don't you know that it is the saints who will be the judges of the world? And if you are to pass judgment on the whole world, how is it that you cannot exercise judgment in these small things? 3Don't you know that we shall be judges even of angels? How much more, then, of these matters of everyday life.

4 At times when questions of daily conduct come up for settlement, why do you choose a court made up of men who are not even esteemed by the church? 5I ask this to make you ashamed. Is it true that there is not a single wise man among you who is able to decide between his brethren? 6And so, to settle matters a brother goes to law against his brother, and that before unbelieving judges.

7 Furthermore, it is surely not to your credit to have lawsuits with one another. Why not rather suffer being wronged? Why not rather be defrauded? 8But on the contrary, you do wrong to others and you defraud them, and you do that to your own brethren.

The Body Is Holy

9 Don't you know that the unjust shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Don't be misled—no fornicators, idolators, adulterers, homosexuals or perverts, 10no thieves, misers, drunkards, slanderers or swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11Some of you once belonged to these classes. But

you have been washed and you have been sanctified and justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of God.

12 Everything is lawful for me, but not everything is good for me. Everything is lawful for me, but I will not let myself be enslaved by anything. 13Food was meant for the stomach, and the stomach craves food, but God will eventually cause both of them to cease their work. The body was not intended for immorality, but for serving the Lord, and the Lord for the body. 14And by His might God raised up the Lord, and He will also raise us to life.

The Body Is the Lord's

15 Don't you know that your bodies are members of the Body of Christ? Shall I, then, take the parts of Christ and join them to a prostitute? No, never! 16Are you not aware that when one is united with a prostitute he becomes one body with her, for as He said, "The two shall become one flesh"? 17Likewise, he who is united with the Lord is one with Him in spirit. 18Shun immorality! Every other sin that a man may commit is done outside his body, but when one indulges in sexual immorality he sins against his own body. 19And don't you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit? He lives within you, a gift from God the Father. So you are not your own. 20You have been bought, and at what a price! Honor God, therefore, with your body and with your spirit, both of which belong to God!

CHAPTER 7

The Mutual Duties of Husbands and Wives

NOW, concerning the things that you asked me about in your letter, let me say: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. 2But because of the temptation to impurity, it is better that each man have a wife of his own, and each

woman a husband of her own. 3The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4The wife does not have sole authority over her own person, for she belongs to her husband. And, similarly, the husband is not the sole master of his own body, for he belongs to his wife.

5 Do not deny each other, unless perhaps you do so for a time, by mutual consent, so that you may better devote yourselves to fasting and prayer. After that, come together again as before so that Satan may not tempt you when you are weak.

6 I am giving this advice, not as a command, but rather as a concession. 7I would rather that everyone were single like myself; but that cannot be, for each one has his own nature from God, one to live in this way and another in that way.

The Advantages of Celibacy

8 I would like to say to the unmarried and to the widows that it would be well for them to remain single, as I am. 9But if they do not have self-control, then they should marry, for it is better to marry than to burn with passionate desire.

The Question of Divorce

10 My command — or rather, the Lord's command — to the married is that a wife should not leave her husband. 11But if she has separated from him, she must either remain single or be reconciled to her husband. And the husband must not divorce his wife.

Mixed Marriages

12 The advice I now give to other people is not the Lord's command, but my own opinion: If a believer has a wife who is not a believer but is willing to live with him, he should not leave her. 13And if a woman has an unbelieving husband who consents to live with her, she should not leave

him. [11]For the unbelieving husband is, so to speak, sanctified by the believing wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the believing husband. Otherwise the children born would be unclean, whereas now they are holy.

15 If the unbelieving partner wants a separation, let it be granted. In such a case the brother or sister is not bound, for God intended that we live together in peace. [16]For after all, O wife, how do you know whether or not you can save your husband? And, O husband, how do you know if you can save your wife?

17 I would add this — that each one should fill the place that God has assigned to him and to which the Lord has called him. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches.

18 Suppose now, that a man at the time of his call was already circumcised. He should not try to remove the marks of circumcision. Or, if uncircumcised at the time of his call, he should not be circumcised. [19]Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision now counts for anything, but what counts is keeping God's commandments.

20 Everyone should continue in the station to which he was called. [21]Were you a slave when called? Don't let that bother you. Still, if you can gain your freedom, make good use of your opportunity. [22]When a slave is called to serve the Lord he becomes the Lord's freedman, while, on the other hand, when a free man is called he becomes the Lord's slave. [23]You were bought at a great price, so do not become the slaves of men. [24]So, brethren, let each one remain with God, content in whatever station he was when called.

Paul's Views on Remaining Single

25 As to the unmarried, I have no commandment from the Lord to give. Still, I offer my views as a man who through the Lord's mercy has been found dependable. [26]I think that, because of the present turmoil, it is best for a man to remain as he is. [27]Are you bound to a wife? Then do not seek to be free. Are you freed from your wife? Then

do not seek another wife. [28]However, if you do marry, you do not thereby sin; or, if a maiden marries, she does not sin by so doing. But remember that those who marry will have added troubles, and I would spare you that.

29 But I say this, brethren, that the time is short. From now on even those who have wives had better live as if they had none. [30]And it will be wise for those who mourn not to weep, and for those who rejoice not to make it known, and for those who are buying something not to seem to have anything. [31]And those who are busy with worldly affairs must not to be overly absorbed in them, for the glory of this world will pass away.

32 I want you to be free from worldly cares. The unmarried man is more free to be concerned about the Lord's work and about how to please the Lord. [33]The married man, on the other hand, is anxious about worldly cares and how to please his wife. In short, he is divided. [34]There is the same difference also between the married and the unmarried woman. The unmarried woman is more concerned about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is concerned more about the things of this world, so that she may please her husband.

35 I say this for your own good, not to make it harder for you, but to point out what is the better way, so that you may serve the Lord without distraction. [36]If anyone feels that he is not behaving properly toward his betrothed, especially if she is getting on in years and he feels there is need for it, let him do as he wishes, and marry her. There is no sin in that. [37]Also that man does well who has a firm purpose in his heart and a sure control over his desires, and then determines to keep his betrothed untouched. [38]He who gives in marriage does well, but he who does not give in marriage does better.

39 A wife is bound by law to her husband as long as he is alive. But at the death of her husband she is free to be

married to another, but only in the Lord. [40]Still, in my judgment, she will be happier if she remains single. I, too, lay claim to have the Spirit of God.

CHAPTER 8

The Eating of Meat Sacrificed to Idols

NOW, as to things sacrificed to idols, it is true that we all know something about it. But knowledge simply puffs one up, while love builds us up. [2]And when a man thinks that he knows a lot, he still has a lot to learn. [3]But if he loves God, he will have knowledge of God.

4 In the matter of eating food offered to idols, we know that an idol-god has no real existence in the world. God exists, but there is no other God. God is One. [5]It is true that men have supposed that there are so-called "gods" both in heaven and on earth. We hear of many such "gods" and many such "lords." [6]But for us there is only one God, the Father, the source of all things and the goal of our life; and there is only one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom everything is made and through whom we live.

The Attitude of Weaker Brethren Important

7 This knowledge of God is not shared by everyone. Some, having been accustomed to idol worship, still regard this meat as food sacrificed to a "god," and as they eat, this defiles their conscience, which is already weak. [8]But food is not what commends us to God. We have no advantage with Him by eating, and we do not fall short by abstaining. [9]Only this: you must be careful that your own freedom in this matter does not somehow become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

10 Suppose that someone should see you seated at a table in an idol's temple; you understand, but might not he be encouraged, if his conscience is feeble, to eat food sacrificed

to idols? [11]By your example, then, you may bring spiritual destruction upon this weaker man, a brother for whom Christ died. [12]And when you sin like this against your brother and further weaken his conscience, then you sin against Christ himself. [13]For that reason your practice should be: If meat is the cause of my brother's downfall, then I will never eat meat again, for fear that I might cause him to fall.

CHAPTER 9

Paul's Rights As an Apostle

AM I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus Christ, our Lord, with my own eyes? Are not you yourselves products of my work in the Lord? [2]Even if I am not an apostle to some others, yet at any rate I am that to you, for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord. [3]And this is my defense in answer to my critics. [4]Don't we also have the right to eat and drink? [5]May we not take along with us on our journeys a Christian sister, or a wife, like the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? [6]Are Barnabas and I the only ones who have no right to rest from working for a living?

The Apostle's Right to Expect Support

7 What soldier ever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard but does not eat any of its grapes? Who takes care of sheep without drinking of their milk? [8]I say this as man to man. But does not the law also say the very same things? [9]For in the law of Moses is it not written. "You shall not muzzle an ox when he is treading out the corn." Is it for the oxen only that God cares? [10]Is it not especially for our sakes? Yes, indeed, it was written for us, for it surely is right that the ploughman as he ploughs, and the thresher as he threshes, should have some hope of a share in the harvest.

11 We have been busy planting spiritual seed in you. Is it a
hardship for you if we reap some of your material harvest?
12If others claim the right to share with you, don't we have
a still greater right? You ask, why have we not then made
use of this right? No, we should rather bear anything than
set up an obstacle in the way of the Gospel of Christ.

13 Surely you must know that those who are in the temple
service get their daily bread from the temple, and the at-
tendants at the altar get a share of the sacrificial offerings.
14In that way, too, the Lord has ordered that those who
preach the Gospel shall live from the Gospel. 15As for me,
I have not made use of any of my rights. Nor am I writing
this now to secure any such belated help. I would rather die
than have anyone make this boast of mine void.

16 I am not boasting of the fact that I preach the Gospel.
Necessity compels me to do that. It would mean "Woe is
me!" if I did not preach the Gospel. 17If I preach it willingly,
I have my pay. But if I do it because I must, I am entrusted
with a responsibility. 18In that case, what pay should I get?
My pay is this, that in my preaching I offer the Good News
about Christ free to all, without making use of my own
right to a living by the Gospel.

Adapting Oneself to Circumstances

19 In this way no one has any claim on me, yet I have
made myself everyone's debtor so as to win more souls.
20With the Jews I became as a Jew that I might win Jews
for Christ. To those under the law I became as one under
the law, though I myself was not under the law, so as to
gain those under the law. 21And to those outside the law I
became as one outside the law too. This did not mean that
I did not recognize the law of God, but it meant that I was
under the law of Christ, so as to win those without any
moral law. 22To the weak I became weak, in order to win
the weak. In short, I have become everything to everyone,
in order that I might by all means save some. 23I am still

doing this for the sake of the Gospel, so that I may have a share in its blessings together with the rest.

Exhortation to Self-Denial

24 You know that of all the runners who compete in a footrace, only one gets the prize. Therefore, run to win. [25]Every competing athlete exercises strict self-control. In such a race the winner receives a perishable wreath, but in the Christian race the prize is an imperishable crown. [26]So I keep on running, but not aimlessly. And I fight, but not as one beating the air. [27]I exercise my own body and make it serve me, so that, after having preached to others, I myself should not be disqualified.

CHAPTER 10

Warning Against False Trust in the Flesh

I WANT to remind you, brethren, that our fathers all marched out of Egypt under the pillar of cloud, and all passed through the Red Sea. [2]And they were all baptized in the cloud and in the sea as followers of Moses. [3]Furthermore, they all ate the same spiritual food. [4]And they drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank of a Spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. [5]Yet most of them disappointed God, and their dead bones lay strewn about in the wilderness.

6 These events are examples to us, warning us not to want to do evil as they did. [7]So do not worship false gods as some of them did, for as Scripture says, "The people sat down to eat and drink, then rose up to dance." [8]We are not to commit fornication, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand of whom fell dead in one day. [9]Nor must we try the patience of the Lord, as some of them did, and they were killed by serpents. [10]We must not grumble, as some of them did, for which they were put to death by the destroying angel (*Exod.* 32:4, 6; *Num.* 25:1-18; 21:5, 6; 16:41, 49).

11 These events that happened to them are examples, and
are recorded as warnings to us who now live toward the end
of time. 12It means this, that he who is sure he stands safely
must take care for fear he may fall. 13You have had no
temptation except such as is common to men. And God is
faithful, for He will not let you be tempted beyond what you
can bear, and when temptation does come, He will provide
a way out of it so that you can come through it victoriously.

Warning Against Desecrating the Lord's Supper

14 My beloved brethren, shun idol worship altogether. 15I
am talking to men of understanding, so you must weigh care-
fully what I say. 16The cup of blessing which we take — is
it not the blood of Christ that we share with Him? And the
bread that we break — is it not the body of Christ that we
also share with Him? 17Though we are many, the one loaf
makes us all one body, for we all share in the one bread.

18 See how the Jews do it! Are not those who eat the
sacrifices partners at the altar services? 19Now, what do I
mean? Am I saying that an idol-god really exists, or that
food sacrificed to idols has some value? 20Not at all, for what
the heathen sacrifice they offer to devils, and not to God.
And I do not want you to have any fellowship with devils.
21You cannot drink both the cup of the Lord and the cup of
devils. You cannot be a guest at both the Lord's Supper and
at the table of devils. 22Or are we trying to stir up God's
anger? Surely, we are not stronger than He, are we?

The Law of Love in Relation to Eating and Drinking

23 As I said, everything is lawful for me, but not every-
thing is good for me, so I can add, everything is lawful for
me, but not everything is constructive. 24Let no one, then,
work only for his own good, but rather let each one seek
the good of others. 25You may eat what is sold at the mar-
kets without asking any questions to satisfy your conscience.
26The earth, with all that is in it, belongs to the Lord.

27 Should some unbeliever ask you to dinner, and you
wish to go, eat what is set before you without asking about
anything to satisfy your conscience. [28]But if someone says
to you, "This was offered to an idol," then do not eat it,
considering your informant and that it is a matter of con-
science. [29]I refer not to your conscience, but his. But why
should my freedom be determined by another man's con-
science? [30]Or, why should they speak evil of me if I eat my
meal in thankfulness and give thanks for what I eat? [31]You
should always give God the glory, whether you eat or drink
or do anything else. [32]Give no offense to Jew or Greek, nor
to the church of God. [33]It is my desire to please everyone
in everything I do. I do not strive for personal profit, but
seek the good of as many as possible, in order that they may
be saved.

CHAPTER 11

The Status and Dress of Christian Women

FOLLOW my example, even as I follow Christ.
[2]I want to give you credit, brethren, for not forgetting me,
and for upholding the traditions that I passed on to you.
[3]And this I want you to understand, that the head of every
man is Christ, the head of every woman is her husband, and
the head of Christ is God. [4]If a man prays or prophesies
with his head covered, he dishonors his head. [5]On the other
hand, if a woman prays or prophesies with her head uncov-
ered, she dishonors her head. She might as well have her
head shaven. [6]If a woman will not wear a covering for her
head, she should get her hair cut, too. But if it is a disgrace
for a woman to be shorn or shaven, then she should wear
a covering.

7 A man ought not to cover his head, for he represents
the person and glory of God, but a woman represents the
glory of man. [8]Man was not created from woman, but the

woman from man. [9]Indeed, man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for man's sake. [10]For this reason a woman ought to have on her head a sign of man's authority for the angels to see. [11]In the sight of God, man is not independent of woman, and woman is not independent of man. [12]For just as the woman was created out of man, so also man is born of a woman, and everything, including humankind, comes from God.

13 But judge for yourselves: Is it proper for a woman to pray to God with nothing on her head? [14]Does not nature itself teach you that it is a disgrace for a man to have long hair? [15]But for a woman to have long hair is different; that is her pride, for her long hair is given her as a covering. [16]If anyone wishes to argue this matter, I can say that we have no such custom (of women going bareheaded) in any of the congregations.

Rebuke of Disorders at the Lord's Table

17 And, while instructing you, let me mention one thing about which I cannot give you praise: It is this, that when you come together to worship you often do more harm than good. [18]When you meet as a congregation, you immediately divide up into factions. This is what I hear, and I can believe it in a measure. [19]Of course, there must be some division among you, otherwise those who are right could not be known. [20]Another thing — when you meet together you do not come to celebrate the Lord's Supper. [21]Each one hastens to eat the supper that he has prepared for himself, so that one man goes away hungry and another gets too much to drink. [22]Don't you have homes where you can eat and drink? Or do you simply despise God's church and humiliate the poor? What ought I to say to you? Praise you? No, I cannot approve.

The Order and Meaning of the Lord's Table

23 I received this account from the Lord, and have given it to you: In the night in which He was betrayed, Jesus took

bread. [24]And when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take, eat. This is My body, which is broken for you. Do this in remembrance of Me."

25 "After the same manner also, when He had supped He took the cup and, when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'All of you drink of it. This cup is the New Testament in My blood, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me.' "

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes. [27]Therefore, if anyone eats this bread or drinks this cup unworthily, he will be held to account for the Lord's body and blood. [28]No one should eat the bread or drink the cup unless he has first examined himself. [29]For if one eats and drinks unworthily he eats and drinks judgment on himself, not recognizing the Lord's body. [30]Because of this indifference, many of you are feeble and sickly, and some have died. [31]But, if we examined ourselves carefully, we should escape this misfortune. [32]And in case God passes sentence on us, He disciplines us to save us if possible from being condemned along with the wicked world. [33]So, brethren, when you come to celebrate the Lord's Supper, wait for one another. [34]Those of you who are hungry should first eat your meal at home, so that your celebration will not bring His condemnation on you. There are other questions which I shall try to settle in person when I come.

CHAPTER 12

The Source of Spiritual Gifts

BRETHREN, I do not want you to be ignorant in regard to spiritual gifts. [2]This you know, that while you were pagans you sought to worship dumb idols, just the way you had been taught. [3]For that reason, I want you to know

this: No one who speaks by the Spirit of God says that Jesus is accursed, and no one confesses Him as Lord except by the same Holy Spirit.

The Varieties and Common Objective of Spiritual Gifts

4 There are different kinds of gifts, but it is the same Spirit who gives them. [5]And there are different kinds of service, but it is the same Lord to be served. [6]And again, there are different ways of doing things, but it is the same God who uses these ways — different ways in different men — throughout.

7 To each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit, for the good of all concerned. [8]To one, the Spirit gives a word of wisdom. To another, the same Spirit gives the word of knowledge. [9]One man receives faith and another receives the gifts of healing, both from the same Spirit. [10]And so on — one can perform miracles, another can prophesy, another can discriminate between spirits, another can speak in different tongues, another can interpret the tongues. [11]Yet it is the one and same Spirit who is at work, distributing His gifts to each one individually according to His good will.

Comparison of the Human Body to the Body of Christ

12 A man's body is a unity, though it has many members. All the members of the body, though many, are one body. So it is with Christ. [13]And by one Spirit we have through baptism been made members of one Body — Jews and Greeks alike, slave and free, — and all have been given to drink at one Source, and the one Spirit.

14 However, the body does not consist of only one member, but of many. [15]If the foot could say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," would it any less belong to the body? [16]And, if it could say to the ear, "I do not belong to the body," is it not a part of the body just the same? [17]If the whole body were an eye, for example, where would be the hearing? Or, if the whole body were an

ear, where would be the sense of smell? [18]Now, as things are, God has placed the organs of the body, each one of them according to His own plan.

19 If all the parts were one single organ, where would the body be? [20]As it is, though, we have many parts, yet only one body. [21]So the eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." [22]But much rather it is the members of the body which seem to be the weaker that are the more indispensable. [23]And those organs of the body which we regard almost devoid of honor are those we surround with special honor, and the more private parts are treated with the greatest modesty and respect. [24]Those parts in us which are more beautiful have no need of such care; and so God has built up the body harmoniously, giving more honor to those parts that need it most. [25]There was to be no lack of unity in the body. All the members of it were to be concerned about their common welfare. [26]Then, if one of the parts suffers pain, all the other parts feel that pain; and if one part is honored, all the other parts find some joy in it.

The Unity of the Body of Christ

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and individually you are members of it. [28]In His church God has made appointments: First, apostles; second, prophets; third, teachers. Also workers of miracles, men with the gifts of healing, helpers and administrators, speakers in foreign tongues, interpreters. [29]Are all the members apostles? Are all of them prophets? Are they all teachers? Do they all work miracles? [30]Do they all have gifts of healing, or speak foreign languages, or interpret? [31]As for you, desire earnestly the higher gifts. I will show you a far better way.

CHAPTER 13

The Greatness of Christian Love

IF I speak in the tongues of men and even of
angels, but have not love, I am like a noisy gong or a
clanging cymbal. [2]And, if I could prophesy, and could un-
derstand all the mysteries, and knew everything, and if I
had perfect faith so that I could remove mountains, but
lacked love, I would be nothing. [3]Again, if I gave away all
my goods to buy food for the poor, and gave my body to be
burned, yet had no love, it would be of no profit to me.

The Characteristics of Christian Love

4 Love is patient and kind. Love is not envious, or vain-
glorious, or arrogant. [5]Love is not unmannerly, does not pur-
sue selfish aims, is not quickly irritated, does not think evil.
[6]Love takes no pleasure in wickedness, but rejoices in the
truth. [7]Love is considerate of all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all things.

The Permanency of Christian Love

8 Love never fails. Prophecies will come to an end, speak-
ing in tongues will cease, knowledge will pass away. [9]For
our knowledge is only in part, and our prophecies are like-
wise imperfect. [10]But when the perfect comes, then the im-
perfect will disappear. [11]So, when I was a child I spoke as
a child, I thought as a child, I reasoned as a child; but when
I became a man I gave up my childish ways. [12]At present
we seem to see only blurred reflections in a mirror, but then
it will be face to face. Now I know only in part, but then I
shall understand fully, even as God has fully understood me.
[13]And now we still have faith, hope, and love — these three
remain, but the greatest of these is love.

CHAPTER 14

The Importance of Prophecy

MAKE love your goal, and aspire to all the spiritual gifts, especially that of prophecy. [2]For when one speaks in a strange tongue, he speaks not so much to men as to God, because no one understands him. He is really telling mysteries in the Spirit. [3]He who prophesies, on the other hand, speaks to men for their upbuilding, encouragement and consolation.

4 When one speaks in an unknown tongue he may edify himself, but when he prophesies he edifies the whole congregation. [5]Surely, I wish that all of you could speak in tongues, but I would much rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is more important than the man who speaks with tongues, unless he interprets what he says so that the faith of the congregation may be strengthened.

6 Brethren, suppose that I come to you speaking in tongues, what good could I do if I did not bring you some revelation, or information, or prophecy, or teaching? [7]Even lifeless instruments, such as the flute or the harp, must give some distinct sound, for how else can anyone know what is played? [8]So also the bugle — if it does not give a clear note, who will get ready for battle? [9]Therefore, in speaking, you too must use a language that men can understand, otherwise how would anyone know what you say? You would just be talking into the air!

10 Truly, there are in the world many different languages, and none without meaning. [11]But if I do not understand the meaning of a language, I am as a foreigner to the man who speaks it, and he is as a foreigner to me. [12]So it is with you. Since you are eager to acquire spiritual gifts, ask for them in abundant measure, for the upbuilding of the church. [13]Therefore, the man who speaks in a tongue should pray for the power to interpret his message.

Tongues Require Interpretation

14 Now, if I pray in a strange tongue, my spirit does the
praying but my understanding is blank. 15What must I do?
I will pray with my spirit, but also with my understanding.
And I will sing praises with my spirit, but also with my un-
derstanding. 16Otherwise, if you pronounce a blessing in the
Spirit, how can an unlearned man say "Amen" to your
thanksgiving if he does not understand what you are saying?
17It is well enough for you to give thanks that way, but it is
of no value to the man who cannot understand you.

18 I am thankful to God that I speak in tongues, more
than all of you. 19Still, in public worship I would rather
speak five words that are understandable, so as to instruct
others, than ten thousand words in a strange tongue.

20 Brethren, do not be children in your thinking. In
matters of evil, be as babes; but in understanding you must
be grown up. 21In the law it is written, "I will speak to this
people in other languages and by other lips, and yet not
even so will they listen to me, says the Lord."

Contrast Between Prophecy and Tongues

22 So, this speaking in tongues is intended for a sign, not
for the believers but for the unbelievers; whereas prophesy-
ing is a sign for the believer rather than the unbeliever. 23For
if the whole congregation is assembled and everyone speaks
in tongues, and some untaught persons or unbelievers hap-
pen to come in, would they not say that you are demented?
24But if everyone prophesies, and some unbeliever or un-
taught person should come in, then he may be convinced of
his sin by all, and all will put questions to him. 25In short,
the secrets of his heart will be revealed and he will fall upon
his face and worship God, declaring, "God is truly among
you."

The Various Gifts Can All Be Used

26 What can we learn from this, my brethren? When you

come together, each one may have a part to contribute — a song, a teaching, a speaking in tongues, a revelation, or an interpretation. . . . Everything should aim at building up the faith. [27]If anyone speaks in a tongue, let it be done by two or, at most, three speakers, one after the other, with an interpreter. [28]And, if there is no one present to explain what was said, let them remain silent in the meeting and each speak his message to himself and to God.

29 The number of prophets to speak should be limited to two or three, while the others should consider carefully what is said. [30]If a revelation comes to someone seated, let the first speaker stop talking. [31]You can all witness, one by one, and in this way all may learn and all may be stimulated. [32]The prophets should exercise control over themselves. [33]For God is a God of peace, not of disorder, as can be seen in all the assemblies of saints.

Services Are to Be Orderly

34 Your women must keep silent at the church meetings. They must take a subordinate place, as the law says. [35]If they have questions to ask, they may ask their husbands at home. For, it is considered a disgrace for women to speak in the church. [36]Did the Word of God originate with you, or, are you the only ones whom it has reached?

37 What I am writing to you is at the Lord's command. If any one of you thinks that he is a prophet or inspired, let him recognize this fact. [38]If he does not admit it, let him remain in ignorance. [39]Anyway, brethren, strive to prophesy and, as for speaking in strange tongues, do not forbid that. [40]And always see to it that everything is done properly and in orderly manner.

CHAPTER 15

Proofs of Jesus' Resurrection

BRETHREN, I want to remind you of the Gospel which I preached to you, and which you accepted, and on

which you stand. [2]And by this you are saved if you hold
fast to the teaching that I left with you, otherwise you have
believed in vain.

3 First and foremost, I passed on to you the teaching I
had received, namely, that Christ died for our sins according
to the Scriptures; [4]also that He was buried and that on the
third day He rose again, as the Scriptures said He would;
[5]and also that He was seen by Cephas, and then by the
Twelve. [6]Next, He appeared to more than five hundred
brethren at one time, most of whom are still alive, though
some have passed on. [7]Later He was seen by James, and
then by all the apostles. [8]Last of all, He appeared to me also
— coming to me as to one untimely born. [9]For I am the
least important of the apostles, unfit even to be called an
apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God, I am what I am, and His
grace toward me has not been without results. I have ac-
tually done more work than all of the others, although
strictly it was not I who did it, but God's grace which was
with me. [11]But whether it was I or they who labored, this
is what we preach, and this is what you have believed.

Necessity of the Resurrection

12 We preach that Christ has been raised from the dead,
and yet some of you say that there is no resurrection of the
dead. How so? [13]If there is no resurrection of the dead, then
Christ was not raised. [14]If Christ has not been raised, then
our preaching counts for nothing and your faith is ground-
less. [15]And we are found also to be false witnesses about
God, for we have proclaimed about God that He raised up
Christ from the dead, which is not true if there is no resur-
rection. [16]For if the dead are never raised, then, surely,
Christ was not raised either. [17]But if Christ has not been
raised, then your faith is vain and you are still in your sins.
[18]And those who died trusting in Christ to save them are
lost forever. [19]And if our hopes in Christ applied only to this

life, and not beyond, then we, of all people, would be the most to be pitied.

The Order of the Resurrections

20 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, and has become the first to be raised of those who have fallen asleep in death. 21Just as death came into the world through a man, so also has the resurrection of the dead come through a Man! 22Just as all die because of Adam, so also shall all be made alive again because of Christ. 23There is a proper order in this unfolding: Christ first, then at Christ's coming, those who believed on Him. 24After that the end will come when He will turn the kingdom over to God, the Father, after having destroyed every other government, authority and power. 25He must reign until He has put His enemies under His feet.

26 Death, also an enemy, is the last to be destroyed. 27Scripture says, "He has put all things in subjection under His feet." But when it says that "He has put all things in subjection," it is self-evident that God, who reduced everything to subjection, is not included. 28And when God shall have put all things in subjection to the Son, then the Son himself will also become subject to God, who had given Him power over everything, so that God will remain all in all.

29 There are some who practice baptism on behalf of the dead. Why do they do that, if the dead do not rise again at all? Why should anyone be baptized for the dead? 30And why do we live in danger every hour? 31I face death daily, notwithstanding our boasting because we have safety in Jesus Christ, our Lord. 32Humanly speaking, what did I gain by "fighting for my life against wild beasts" at Ephesus? If there is no resurrection from the dead, why not say, "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die"?

33 Don't be misled by such reasonings. Bad company harms good manners. 34Come to your senses and stop sinning. Some of you do not know God at all. I say this to your shame.

The Manner of the Resurrection

35 Some will ask, "How can the dead rise?"; or, "What
sort of a body will they have when they come back?" 36Don't
be foolish. You know that when you sow a seed it has to
die before it can grow again. 37And you know that when you
sow, you do not sow the body that is to be, but a bare seed,
such as wheat or some other grain. 38God then gives to each
seed a body according to His own plans, that is, to each seed
its own body.

39 In a similiar way, not all flesh is the same. One kind
is the flesh of men, another kind is the flesh of beasts, or
of fish, or of birds. 40And there are heavenly bodies and
earthly bodies, and the glories of the heavenly bodies are
very different from the glories of the earthly. 41For instance,
the sun has one kind of beauty, the moon has another, and
the stars still another. In fact, each star differs from every
other star in its splendor.

42 In some such way is the resurrection of the dead. The
body is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. 43It
is sown in dishonor; it is raised in honor. It is sown in weak-
ness; it is raised in strength. 44It is sown a natural body;
it is raised a spiritual body. 45As Scripture records it, "The
first man, Adam, became a living soul." The Last Adam was
a life-giving Spirit.

46 It was not the spiritual that came first, but the physical.
The spiritual came afterward. 47The first man was from the
earth, made of dust; the Second Man was the Lord, who
came out of heaven. 48The nature of the man made of dust
is repeated in all men — all made of dust; the nature of the
Man from heaven is repeated in those who are of heaven.
49And just as we have been like the man made of dust, so
also we can become like the Man from heaven.

50 I want to say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot
inherit the kingdom of heaven, nor will the perishable in-
herit the imperishable.

The Final Victory

51 And I shall tell you a secret: We are not all going to
die, but we are all going to be changed. 52It will come about
suddenly, quickly, in the twinkling of an eye. There will be
the sound of a trumpet, and the dead will be raised, and we
shall all be changed. 53For it is necessary that this perish-
able nature must change to an imperishable, and this mortal
must put on immortality. 54And when this perishable nature
shall have changed to the imperishable, and this mortal na-
ture shall have become immortal, then the words of Scrip-
ture will be fulfilled: "Death is swallowed up in victory!
55Where, then, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is
your sting?" (*Isaiah* 25:8; *Hosea* 13:14).

56 It is sin that gives death its sting, and it is the law
that gives sin its strength. 57But thanks be to God, for He
gives us the victory through our Lord, Jesus Christ!

58 So, my beloved brethren, stand firm, immovable, al-
ways busy in the Lord's work, knowing that what you do in
the service of the Lord is labor not thrown away!

CHAPTER 16

The Collection for the Poor

AND now, a word about the offering, to help the
needy saints. I have already directed the churches in Galatia
as to what to do, and I should like to have you follow the
same procedure. 2On the first day of each week, each one of
you should put something aside, according to his financial
ability, and save it, so that solicitations need not be made
when I come. 3Then, on my arrival, I shall give letters of
recommendation to the persons you have selected, and send
them on with your contribution to Jerusalem. 4And if it
proves convenient for me to go also, they may go with me
as my companions.

Paul's Approaching Visit

5 I intend to come to you after I have visited Macedonia,
for I have to pass through there. [6]I expect to stay with you
some time, and may even pass the winter with you, so you
may have a chance to help me on my way from there to
whatever points I may decide to go. [7]I do not want to visit
you now, for that would have to be just a brief call; but
later I hope to come and stay with you for a longer time,
if the Lord permits me. [8]I intend to stay on in Ephesus until
Pentecost. [9]A door has opened to me here to do great and
good work, although there are also many who are hostile.

Commendation of Timothy and Apollos

10 If Timothy comes to you, make him feel at home with
you. He works zealously for the Lord, as I, too, try to do.
[11]Therefore there is no reason why anyone should look down
on him. And send him on his way back to me, with your
prayers, for I am expecting to meet him here with some
other brethren.

12 As for Brother Apollos, I urged him strongly to go
with the brethren to see you, but he was not at all willing
to come just now. But he will come when he has an
opportunity.

13 Be on your guard, stand firm in the faith, be manly,
be strong. [14]Let everything you do be done in love.

Admonition to Appreciate Their Ministers

15 You know that the first converts in Greece were from
the family of Stephanas, and that they have devoted them-
selves to the service of the saints. Now I have a request to
make of you, brethren. [16]I beg of you that you put yourself
under leaders like these, and under anyone who cooperates
with you and helps in the Lord's work. [17]I am happy over
the arrival of Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, for they
supplied what you needed. [18]They refreshed my spirit, and
yours, too. You should, therefore, acknowledge their help.

Conclusion

19 The churches of Asia send greetings to you. Also
Aquila and Prisca (Priscilla), and the congregation that meets
at their house, salute you cordially in the Lord. [20]All the
brethren wish to be remembered. Greet one another with
a holy kiss.

21 Finally, this greeting from myself — made with my
own hand. [22]Our Lord is coming. A curse be on anyone who
does not love the Lord, Jesus Christ.

23 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you! [24]My
love be with you all in Christ Jesus! Amen!

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE CORINTHIANS

CHAPTER 1

Greeting

THIS is from Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and also from Brother Timothy, to the Church of God in Corinth, as well as all the other saints in the whole land of Greece. [2]Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

Thanksgiving

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merciful Father, the God of every comfort! [4]He comforts us in all our troubles, so that we may be able to comfort others who are in trouble, with the same comfort that we ourselves have received from God. [5]The sufferings of Christ have, indeed, come into our lives plentifully, yet through Christ we have received abundant consolation.

6 So, too, if we have trials to endure, they should be for your comfort and salvation. That is, if you have been tried and have endured, you will receive comfort as we have. Again, if we receive comfort, that is also intended for your comfort and salvation. [7]It makes our hopes for you all the more sure when we know that you share with us both in sufferings and encouragements.

8 Brethren, we want you to know something about the sufferings that came upon us in Asia. They were so overwhelming that our strength could not hold out, and we despaired of life itself. [9]It seemed to us as though we had been sentenced to death, but the purpose of this was to make us lose confidence in ourselves and place it in God, who is able even to raise the dead. [10]Yes, He saved us from imminent death, and He will still save us in the future. [11]You also can work together with us, and for us, by your prayers. And many will thank God for His favors to us, no doubt an answer to the prayers of many people.

Paul's Forthcoming Visit

12 We boast of this, and our conscience backs us up, that
our general behavior in public, and more especially together
with you, was one of holy living and godly sincerity, which
was not by human cunning but by God's grace. [13]I am not
saying anything that you cannot understand as well as read,
and I trust that you will admit this even to the end of this
letter. [14]You have already in part recognized us, that we are
your pride as you are ours, and so it will be on the Day of
the Lord Jesus.

15 Because of my confidence in you, I planned on coming
to you first, so that you would enjoy two visits. [16]That is,
I should stop at your place in going to Macedonia, and in
coming from Macedonia I should again come to you, and
you would see me off on my way to Judea. [17]This was, in-
deed, my intention, and was there anything fickle in that?
Or do I make my plans like some worldly man, saying "yes,
yes," and changing to "no, no," according to circumstance?
[18]As surely as God is faithful, our word to you was not of
the "yes-and-no" variety. [19]Jesus Christ, the Son of God,
whom we (Silvanus, Timothy and I) preached among
you, was not a "yes-and-no" Man, but in Him was "Yes."
[20]In Him all the promises of God are "Yes," and in Him they
are "Amen," and for this we give glory to God. [21]For it is
God who has confirmed our faith and your faith in Christ,
and God who has anointed us. [22]He has set His seal on us,
and has given us His Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.

23 Upon my soul, I call God as witness that the reason
that I did not come to you at Corinth was to spare you.
[24]We do not aim to rule over you or your faith. Rather, we
are working together with you to make you happy. It is, of
course, by faith that you stand.

CHAPTER 2

Unpleasant Aspects of the Visit

IN thinking it through, I made up my mind not to
come to you again in displeasure. [2]For, if I were to bring
sorrow to you, who then would make me glad, except the
very ones whom I have offended? [3]Indeed, I said this very
thing in my letter to you, for fear that when I came I might
have sorrow from those whom I should expect to give me
joy. I trust that you are all alike in this, that what would
make me happy would also have the same effect on all of
you. [4]And when I wrote to you, I was much troubled, had
anguish in my heart and shed many tears. I did not wish to
bring sorrow upon you, but rather to have you know of the
abundant love I have for you.

Restoration of an Excommunicated Brother

5 But if there is anyone who has caused grief, it is not
me only whom he has caused sorrow, but all of you, at least
in some measure, not to overstate the case. [6]The majority
of you have censured him for his misdeeds, and I think this
is, in his case, punishment enough. [7]Now it would seem
proper for you to turn about and forgive him and encourage
him, otherwise his sorrow may overpower him. [8]I urge you,
therefore, to show him that you still love him. [9]I had this
in mind, too, when I wrote about him, to see some proof
of how obedient you are in carrying out my orders. [10]I, too,
am willing to forgive anyone anything that you forgive. And
when I have pardoned anyone for anything, I too have done
it for your sake in the name of Christ. [11]For thus Satan will
not get the better of us; for we know about his designs.

Paul's Ministry a Triumphant Service

12 When I went to Troas to preach the Gospel of Christ,
there was there an open door for me in the Lord. [13]Still, I

had no peace of mind, because I did not find Titus, my brother, there. I therefore took leave of them and went on to Macedonia. 14But, thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us to victory, and through us makes our knowledge of Him penetrate every place like a sweet perfume! 15For we are to God the sweet perfume of Christ, made manifest both among those who are being saved and also those who are going to destruction. 16To the latter, it is the smell of doom and death itself, but to the former it is a perfume of life to life. Now, who is competent to preach that way? 17We are, for we are not, like so many, making profit by teaching God's Word falsely. No, we are sincere. We have been sent out by God, we are Christ's ministers, and speak as in God's presence.

CHAPTER 3

The Ministry an Accredited Service

ARE we beginning to recommend ourselves again? Do we need letters of recommendation to you, or from you? 2You are our letter. The writing is in your heart, read and understood by everyone. 3It is plain that you are a letter from Christ, because of our work, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, and not on stone tablets, but on tablets of human hearts. 4We have such a confidence in God through Christ. 5It is not that we are competent of ourselves to think that we ourselves can do anything good. No, our competency comes from God. 6He has made us competent to serve as ministers of the New Covenant. It is a covenant, not of the letter (of the Law), but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

A Permanent and Splendid Goal

7 The Law, engraved on stone, served to bring death penalties, yet it came with such splendor that the children

of Israel could not look at Moses' face because of its brightness, a glory that soon faded away. [8]Why should not the service rendered by the Spirit have a much greater glory? [9]For if the service of the Law, resulting in condemnation, had its glory, how much greater and more glorious is the service of the Spirit, causing justification? [10]Truly, in this respect, that which once had been considered glorious no longer seems to be glorious, because of the new glory that surpasses it. [11]For if what has been annulled came in glory, how much more glorious is the present plan, which is to remain!

The Ministry an Open and Glorious Service

12 And because we have such a hope we speak with much boldness. [13]We are not like Moses, who covered his face with a veil, which prevented the Israelites from gazing at the end of something that was to fade. [14]Their minds were hardened, so that to this day, whenever the Old Covenant is being read, the same veil is still there, still unlifted, for only through Christ can it be taken away. [15]Yes, it is true that to this day, whenever Moses is read, that veil lies over their hearts. [16]But if one turns to the Lord the veil is removed. [17]Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom. [18]And then with unveiled faces we can all behold, as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord. And we become changed into His likeness, from glory to glory, through the Spirit of the Lord working in us.

CHAPTER 4

The Ministry an Unselfish Service

THROUGH His mercy we have taken up this service; therefore we are not faint-hearted. [2]We have put a ban on secret and disgraceful methods. We refuse to practice deceit and to falsify the Word of God. But, by an open statement of the truth, we would commend ourselves before

God to the conscience of every man. [3]And if there is a veil also over our Gospel, it is there only to those who are lost. [4]They are the unbelievers whose minds the god of this world has blinded. They are kept from seeing the radiant light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ, who is God's own likeness.

5 Surely, what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord; and about ourselves we simply say that we are your servants for Jesus' sake. [6]For God, who once said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give us light and to give us knowledge of God's glory, as seen in the face of Jesus Christ.

The Trials of the Ministry

7 We keep this treasure in bodies of clay, to show that this surpassing power is from God and is not in us. [8]And so, though we are oppressed on every hand, we are not crushed; and though we are at times perplexed, we are never at a loss. [9]Though we are persecuted, we are not forsaken; and though struck down, we are not destroyed. [10]In our bodies we always carry with us the death of the Lord Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be set forth in our lives. [11]That is, if while still living we are always suffering death on account of Jesus, it is in order that the living power of Jesus may also work in our mortal frame. [12]So while death is at work in us, life is also working in you.

13 We have the same kind of faith as the one who wrote, "I believed, therefore I spoke," and so we speak as we believe. [14]We know that He who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus, and will give us, together with you, a place in His glory. [15]We are doing all these things for your sake, so that, as grace reaches out to more and more, the thanksgiving that will go up in praise to God will also increase.

The Assurance of a Future Life in Glory

16 No, we do not lose heart. On the contrary, even when our outer nature is wearing out, our inner nature is, notwith-

standing, being renewed from day to day. [17]We have trials, but they are light and for the moment only, and they work out for us a blessedness that is beyond all comparison, and everlasting. [18]Oh, if we could turn our thoughts to things unseen, rather than to things visible! For the things we see are transitory, but things unseen are eternal.

CHAPTER 5

The Limitations of the Earthly Body

WE know that this earthly house of our soul will be destroyed, and that we then shall receive from God another house, not made by hands, everlasting in heaven. [2]In our present body we groan inwardly, and we long to be clothed with the glorified body from heaven. [3]Then, indeed, on that day we shall be found so clothed, not naked. [4]While in this body, we groan because of our heavy burdens. It is not that we want to die and be stripped of our bodies, but rather that we should be clothed with new bodies, so that this mortal may be absorbed by immortal life. [5]It is God who has prepared us for this very end, and He has also given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 Of this we are always sure. We know that while we are at home here in the body we are away from the Lord. [7]So we walk by faith, not by sight. [8]We are cheerful, though we would be more happy to be away from our earthly body and to be at home with the Lord. [9]And also for that reason we are eager to be found well-pleasing to Him, whether we are away from home, or at home with Him. [10]For we must all be tried before the judgment-seat of Christ, so that each one will be rewarded for what he has done in this earthly life, whether good or bad.

Love of Jesus Christ the Driving Force

11 With men's fear of God in our minds, we try to win men for Him. What we really are is known to God, and so,

I hope, we are also known to your consciences. [12]No, we are not again trying to recommend ourselves to you. Rather, we are giving you an occasion to recommend us, and this you can do to those who pride themselves on outward appearances instead of the heart. [13]And if we have been beside ourselves, it was for God, and if we are now in right mind, it is for you. [14]It is the love of Christ that controls us. We are convinced that as One died for all, so all have died. [15]Yes, He died for all, that those who live might no longer live only for themselves, but for Him who died for them and was raised again.

The Christian a New Creation

16 From now on, therefore, we do not evaluate a person from a worldly point of view. There was a time when we even regarded Christ by such a standard, but we no longer do that. [17]If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation altogether. The old has passed away and has become altogether new. [18]God has done it all. Through Jesus Christ He has reconciled us to Himself, and He has given us the ministry of reconciliation. [19]When God, through Christ, was reconciling the whole world to Himself, He no longer reckoned men's sins against them, and He entrusted to us men the message of reconciliation. [20]Now we are Christ's ambassadors. God makes His appeal through us. So we plead, on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God! [21]For God caused Christ, who had never sinned, to be sin for us, so that in Him we might receive justification from God.

CHAPTER 6

Summary of the Ministry

WORKING together with God, we entreat you not to fail to use His grace. [2]For He says, "I listened to you at the right time, and helped you on the day of salvation.

Behold! now is the right time, now is the day of salvation."
[3]We do not want to give offense in anything, lest fault may
be found with our ministry. [4]We want to prove ourselves
good servants of God in every way; through great endurance,
afflictions, distresses, calamities, [5]floggings, imprisonments,
riots, sleepless nights and hunger; [6]in purity, knowledge, for-
bearance and kindness, by the Holy Spirit and in sincere
love. [7]We must rely on the truth of the Word and the power
of God, and must be armed with weapons of righteousness
for the right hand and the left. [8]We must experience honor
and dishonor, ill repute and good repute. They call us im-
posters, though we are not. [9]They rate us as unknown, yet
we are well known; we are said to be dying, but, see! we
live; being punished, but not yet put to death. [10]We are sad,
yet always happy; poor, yet making many rich; having noth-
ing, yet possessing everything needed.

A Call to Separation from the World

11 We have spoken freely to you, Corinthians; our hearts
are thrown wide open to you. [12]Our affections toward you
are not restricted, but rather, you are restricted in your own
affections. [13]In return — now I speak as to children — you
should widen your affections toward us.

14 Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what
partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? And what
fellowship has light with darkness? [15]Or what agreement is
there between Christ and Belial? Or what has a believer in
common with an unbeliever? [16]What alliance is there be-
tween a temple of God and idols? God has said that we are
the temple of the living God. He said, "I will live in them,
and move among them, and I will be their God, and they
will be My people. [17]'Therefore,' says the Lord, 'come out
from them and be separate; touch nothing unclean, and I
will receive you. [18]And I will be a Father to you, and you
shall be My sons and daughters,' says the Lord Almighty"
(*Leviticus* 26:12; *Isaiah* 52:11).

CHAPTER 7

Paul's Appeal for a Renewal of Fellowship

WITH promises like these, beloved, let us make
ourselves clean from everything that defiles body and soul,
and strive toward perfect holiness in the fear of God.
2Receive us into your hearts. We have not wronged anyone.
We have not corrupted anyone. We have not made profit
out of any man. 3I am not saying this to condemn you, for
I have already told you that you are dear to us, both to die
together and to live together. 4I trust you; I am proud of
you; I am much encouraged by you; I rejoice in spite of our
troubles.

Comfort Brought by Titus' Report

5 Already when we came to Macedonia we had troubles
— we could not rest our bodies. We were oppressed on every
side; we had fightings without and fears within. 6But God,
who lifts up the downcast, comforted us by the coming of
Titus. 7And not only did his coming comfort us, but also
the comfort that you had given him was a help. For he told
us how you longed to see us, how sorry and zealous you
were in my behalf, all of which made me rejoice the more.

A Frank Letter and Its Results

8 Even though I grieved you with my letter, I do not
regret having sent it; although I did regret it at the time,
when I heard that it had caused you grief. 9Now I am happy
about it, not because you were grieved, but because your
grief brought you to repentance. Your grief was then as God
would have it be, so that you suffered no harm from us in
any way. 10For the grief that God approves of results in a
repentance that leads to salvation, and leaves no regrets. A
worldly grief, on the other hand, results in death.

11 Take note how this godly sorrow has worked in you;
what earnestness it worked in you, what eagerness to defend
yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what
zeal, what willingness to discipline! In every way you have
cleared yourself in this matter.

Paul's Confidence in the Corinthians

12 I wrote to you, but really not so much on account of
the man who was doing wrong nor for the sake of the one
who was suffering wrong, but rather to let you see your-
selves, as before God, how devoted to us you really are.
13All this has given us comfort. And, in addition to our own
comfort from you, we have been still more overjoyed at
Titus' joy, because he was refreshed in spirit by all of you.
14You see, if I had boasted of you to him, I have not been
put to shame. For just as all I said to you was true, so what
I said about you to Titus, in a boasting way, proved to be
true. 15His heart goes out to you more than ever now, as he
recalls the way all of you obeyed him and how you received
him with respect and reverence. 16It gives me joy to say that
you have justified my good opinion of you in every way.

CHAPTER 8

The Macedonian Attitude in Sharing With the Needy

BRETHREN, we want to tell you about God's
grace as it was given to the churches of Macedonia. 2They
were being tested by afflictions, but they had a great store of
joy; so, despite their deep poverty, they displayed a wealth
of generosity. 3For they gave to the limit of their means, to
which I can testify, and they gave beyond their ability and
of their own free will. 4They begged us earnestly and of their
own accord to be allowed to share in the work of supporting
their fellow-Christians. 5And they gave not only money, as
we had hoped they would, but they even gave themselves,

first to the Lord and then to us, by the will of God. [6]Since Titus had already made a beginning, we urged him also to complete among you this work of charity.

Paul's Exhortation on Liberality

7 You are rich in so many things — in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in enthusiasm, and in your love for us; may you also excel in this work of charity. [8]I do not say this as a command, but to test the genuineness of your love by comparing it with the eagerness of others. [9]You recall the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though rich, yet He became poor for your sakes, that by His poverty you might be made rich. [10]In this matter, then, I offer my counsel: It is a good thing for you now not only to complete the task you began a year ago, but also to want to complete it. [11]By all means, complete the work of ingathering. Do it in such a way that your willingness to give is matched by your actually giving out of what you have. [12]If one is willing to give, a gift according to what he has is acceptable, rather than according to what he does not have. [13]This does not mean that others should be relieved and that you should be distressed. [14]No, it is a matter of equality. You give now out of your abundance to supply their want. [15]Some other time, their abundance may supply your want.

Concerning the Messengers

16 But thanks be to God who put into the heart of Titus this same sincere concern for you. [17]He not only accepted our appeal, but was so enthusiastic about it that, of his own accord, he went to you. [18]We are also sending with him another brother, one who has won praise from all the congregations for his preaching of the Gospel. [19]And not only that, but he has also been appointed by all the congregations to be our companion in this gracious work of ours, to help further the glory of the Lord and to show our willingness. [20]Thus we shall avoid any criticism concerning the administration of the money

we have collected. [21]Our aim is to do the right thing, not only before the Lord, but also before men.

22 And so we are sending with them this brother of ours, who has in many matters and on many occasions given proof of his faithfulness; and now he is more eager than ever, because of the faith he has in you. [23]Titus, then, is my partner, and a fellow-worker in your service; as for our other brethren, they are sent by the congregations, and they reflect the glory of Christ. [24]Give proof, therefore, before them and all the congregations, of your love and of our pride in you.

CHAPTER 9

Christian Giving, a Joy to the Giver

IT may seem a waste of time for me to write to you about the offering for the Christian brethren. [2]I know about your readiness, and I proudly told about you to the Macedonians, saying that Greece (Achaia) has been prepared since last year, and most of them were stirred by your zeal. [3]I have, nevertheless, sent the brethren, so that our confidence in you may not prove to be misplaced, and so that you may be ready, even as I said you were. [4]Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find you unprepared, we shall be put to shame — and you, too, of course — for having been so confident. [5]That is why I thought it necessary to ask these brethren to go on to you ahead of me, and to take up beforehand this offering that you had promised, and thus it would be a willing gift and not a begrudged obligation.

6 Let me add this: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, but he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. [7]Let each one give as he has purposed in his heart; not with reluctance nor under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. [8]In return, God is able to give you every blessing in rich measure, so that you may always have all you need in

every way, and so that you may have abundantly for every good work. 9So Scripture says, "He scatters abroad and gives to the poor; his righteousness lasts for ever."

God Honors Faithful Stewardship

10 And He who supplies the sower with seed and with bread to eat, will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and He will increase the fruits of your righteous acts! 11You will be enriched in every way, towards greater generosity, too, and so through us men will thank God for it. 12This service, then, is not limited to supplying the wants of fellow-saints, but it also overflows in a tide of thanksgiving to God. 13In the way that you stand the test of this service — by your obedience, by your acceptance of the Gospel of Christ, and by the liberality of your contribution in behalf of them and of all others — just so are you giving honor to God. 14Then they in turn will long for you and pray for you, on account of the surpassing grace that God has given you. 15Now, thanks be to God for this free gift, more priceless than words can tell!

CHAPTER 10

Paul's Authentication As an Apostle

I, PAUL, now appeal to you personally, by the meekness and gentleness of Christ. When I am in your midst I am meek, but when I am away from you I am boldly outspoken to you. 2I beg of you that when I am with you again, I shall not have to be outspoken and stern, as I fear I must be toward some of you who look upon us as working only for human satisfaction. 3Granted that we live in the flesh, yet we do not fight our battles according to the flesh. 4And the weapons we fight with are not carnal, but spiritual, and, with God's help, powerful in overthrowing the strongholds of the enemy. 5We can overthrow the arguments and all other

obstacles that are set up against the true knowledge of God. We can take every thought captive and make it obey Christ. [6]And when once you have surrendered to Him, we are ready to punish any disobedience against Him.

7 You look at something and judge by appearances. A man may feel sure that he belongs to Christ. Let him reflect about it and bear in mind that we also belong to Christ, even as he belongs to Him. [8]For suppose that I boast a little too much about our authority — which the Lord gave us to build you up, not to pull you down — I will not be ashamed of it.

9 I do not want it to appear that I am trying to frighten you by my letters. [10]They say, "His letters are weighty and strong, but in body he is feeble, and there is nothing to his speeches." [11]But let such critics understand this, that whatever we say by letter when we are absent, that we also do when present. [12]We do not presume to class ourselves, or even compare ourselves, with certain people who speak well of themselves, for they do not show good judgment when they measure themselves by one another, and compare themselves with one another. [13]We are not going to make any extravagant claims. We shall keep within the limits that God has marked out for us, and they reach all the way to you.

14 We are not claiming too much, as though we had not come to you. The fact is, we did come also to you with the Gospel of Christ. [15]We are not boasting extravagantly about the work done by others, but we do hope that as your faith increases, our influence among you may also greatly increase. [16]We should like to go on to other lands beyond you, without having to take credit for work done in another's field. [17]As for boasting, let him who boasts do so in the Lord. [18]For it is not the self-approved man who is accepted, but the man of whom the Lord approves.

CHAPTER 11

Paul's Godly Jealousy for the Corinthians

I WISH you would put up with a little folly from
me. Please, do be patient with me! [2]I am jealous for you.
It is like the jealousy of God Himself. I myself espoused you
to one Man, Christ, presenting you as a chaste virgin. [3]Yet
I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning,
somehow or other your thoughts also will be corrupted and
led astray from their simple devotion to Christ. [4]For if some-
one comes along and preaches another Jesus than the One
we proclaim, or if you receive a spirit other than you re-
ceived from us, or if you accept a gospel that you had not
accepted from us, you will submit to it readily.

5 Still, I do not consider myself at all inferior to these
"outstanding" apostles of yours. [6]And even if I am not a
polished speaker, I surely am not lacking in knowledge. For
this has been made plain to you in every way, and on every
question. [7]Maybe I committed sin when I preached God's
Gospel to you without pay, thereby degrading myself in
order that you might be exalted. [8]I did take money from
other congregations for my support in order to serve you.
[9]When I was with you there were times when I was in need,
yet I did not burden anyone of you, and my wants were com-
pletely supplied by the brethren who came down from Mace-
donia. So I refrained from being a burden to you in any
way, and will continue that way.

10 As sure as the truth of Christ is in me, this boast of
mine shall not be silenced in the land of Greece. [11]Why?
Does it mean that I do not love you? God knows that I do.

The Warning Against False Teachers

12 I shall continue to do what I am doing, so that I may
not give any chance to those who are looking for opportun-
ity to make the claim in their boasting that they work on the

same terms as we do. [13]They are false apostles, deceitful workmen, in disguise passing as Christ's apostles! [14]And no wonder, for Satan himself comes along disguised as an angel of light! [15]So, it is not remarkable that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. But their end will correspond to their works.

Paul's Enforced Boasting

16 I repeat, let no one think that I am vain. But if you do, then look upon me as a fool, and let me also boast a little. [17]What I am now saying, I say not by order of the Lord; I am speaking as a fool, boastful and confident. [18]And since men generally boast of their personal affairs, I, too, will do the same. [19]Since you yourselves are so wise, you enjoy being tolerant to fools. [20]You submit to it when they make slaves of you, when they prey upon you and rob you, when they exalt themselves and slap you in the face. [21]To my shame, I admit that we are that weak. I am going to speak foolishly now. I, too, will dare to boast of anything about which anyone else dares to boast.

22 Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. [23]Are they servants of Christ? I am too, and more so — now I am talking like a madman. I have done more work than anyone else, have been oftener in prison, have been beaten times without number, have often faced death. [24]Five times the Jews gave me a whipping of forty lashes less one. [25]Three times I was beaten with rods, and once I was stoned. I have been shipwrecked three times, and I have spent a night and a day in the watery deep. [26]On my frequent journeys I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from robbers, in danger from my own people, in danger from the Gentiles. I have faced perils in the city, the desert, at sea, and among false brethren. [27]I have experienced hard work and weariness, many a sleepless night, hunger and thirst, have often been without meals, exposed to cold, and poorly clad.

28 And, in addition to such external things, the anxiety
for all the churches has rested on me. 29If anyone is weak,
have I not sympathized with his weakness? Who has been
upset without my burning with desire to help him? 30And if
it is right for me to boast, I should like to boast of things
that show my own weakness! 31God, the Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ — He who is blessed for ever and ever — knows
that I am not lying. 32This happened in Damascus. Under
King Aretas, the governor guarded the city, wishing to cap-
ture me. 33But I was let down in a basket through a window
in the wall, and escaped his clutches.

CHAPTER 12

Paul's Vision of the Third Heaven

NO, it is surely not profitable for me to boast.
But I will go on and tell about some visions and revelations
of the Lord that I have had. 2I know a Christian man who
fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven.
Whether he was in the body or out of the body when this
happened, I do not know. God knows. 3I repeat that I know
the man, but I do not know whether he was in the body or
out of the body. God knows that. 4I know that he was taken
up into paradise, and there he heard words that may not be
spoken and that man must not repeat. 5I am proud of this
man's vision, but otherwise I will not boast of anything ex-
cept my weaknesses. 6If I should choose to boast, it would
not be vanity, for I should be telling the very truth. But I
shall refrain from saying more, for I do not want anyone to
think more highly of me than he does when he sees me or
hears me speak.

The Thorn in the Flesh

7 And because the revelations that I had were so sur-
passingly wonderful, I was given a chronic pain in my body.

It bothered me like a satanic angel, but it kept me from becoming puffed up. [8]I asked the Lord three times to rid me of it. [9]His answer was, "My grace is enough for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness." I should rather — and most gladly — boast of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest with me. [10]That is why I take such pleasure in weaknesses, in hardships, persecutions and calamities. Yes, indeed, when I am weak, then I am strong.

Paul Not a Burden to the Corinthians

11 I have been making a fool of myself boasting. But you forced me to do it, for any praise of me should have come from you. And I am not a bit inferior to your super-great apostles, even if I am rated as a nobody. [12]The marks of a true apostle were worked out when I was with you, all done patiently, with signs and wonders and mighty works. [13]In what respect were you less favored than the other churches, except that I myself did not burden you with my expenses? Forgive me if I wronged you in this.

14 I stand ready now to come to you for the third time, and again I shall not be a burden, for I seek not what is yours, but you yourselves. It is the parents who should lay up treasures for their children, not children for their parents. [15]Consequently, I shall most gladly spend and be completely spent on behalf of your souls, even though it may mean that the more I love you, the less you love.

16 Perhaps you allow that I was not a financial burden to you, but yet you say that I was crafty and got the better of you by deceit. [17]Did I make a profit out of you by any of those whom I have sent to serve you? [18]I asked Titus to visit you, and I sent the brother along with him. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did not he and I act in the same spirit? Did we not follow the same course?

His Promised Return With Authority

19 Again, you may be thinking that we are trying to justify ourselves in your eyes. Yes, but I am also, as Christ's

follower, giving an account before God. And, my beloved, everything is done for your spiritual welfare. [20]For, I suspect that when I come, perhaps I shall not find you as I should like you to be, and that you also will not find me as you may want me to be. I am afraid that, perhaps, I shall find quarreling, jealousy, ill-will, rivalry, slander, gossiping, pride and disorder. [21]I fear also that when I come my God may humiliate me before you, so that I shall have to mourn over many who have continued in sin and have not yet repented of the impurity, fornication and licentiousness they have been practicing.

CHAPTER 13

Admonition to Self-Examination

THIS will be my third visit to you. Every charge must be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. [2]When I was with you on my second visit I forewarned those who had sinned, as well as all the rest, that if I came again I should not spare them, and, though absent, I now repeat the warning in writing. [3]I do this because you look for a proof that Christ speaks through me. There is no weakness in Him toward you, and He is powerful in you. [4]Indeed, though He was crucified in weakness, yet He goes on living by God's power. And likewise, since we are united with Him because of our weakness, we shall, as in your case, be alive with Him through God's power.

5 Examine yourselves to see if you have faith. Make sure of yourselves. Are you not conscious within you that Jesus Christ is in you? Or are you backsliders? [6]I trust that you will be convinced that we are not backsliders.

7 I pray God that you may do no evil, although I do not imply that we have met the test. We want you to do what is right, even though we may appear to have failed. [8]No, we cannot do anything against the truth, but only for it. [9]And

we rejoice when we are weak, if only you are strong. And that is also what we pray for, that you may be made perfect.

10 On that account I now write this while I am away from you, so that, on arriving, I may not have to treat you harshly in accordance with the authority that the Lord gave me. It was meant for building up, and not for tearing down.

The Apostolic Farewell

11 Finally, brethren, goodbye; rejoice! Seek perfection, take courage, be of the same mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace be with you. [12]Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints send you their greeting. [13]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS

CHAPTER 1

Salutation

FROM Paul, an apostle—not from man nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead — [2]and from all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia. [3]Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, [4]who gave Himself for our sins so that He might, according to the will of God our Father, save us from this present wicked world. [5]To Him be the glory for ever and ever! Amen.

Reasons for Writing

6 I am dumbfounded that you have so quickly deserted Him who called you into the grace of Christ, and have gone over to a different "gospel." [7]No, it is not another gospel. But there are people who trouble you, and who want to pervert the Gospel of Christ. [8]Yet, even if we, or an angel from heaven, were to preach to you a gospel contrary to the one that we have preached to you, may he be accursed! [9]Let me repeat what I have just said: If anyone shall proclaim to you a gospel different from what you have received, let there be a curse on him!

Paul's Message from God, Not from Tradition

10 Do you think, now, that I am trying to win the favor of men? Or, is it God's approval I want? Am I seeking to please men? If I were trying to please men, I would not be what I am, a servant of Christ. [11]Brethren, I want you to know that the Gospel that I preached to you is not an invention of man. [12]I did not get it from any man, and I was not taught it. I got it from Jesus Christ by a revelation.

13 You have heard of my former conduct in the Jewish religion, how fanatical I was in persecuting the Church of God, and in trying to destroy it. [14]I was far advanced in

Judaism, surpassing many of my own age and race, and far more zealous for the traditions of the fathers. [15]But God, who had chosen me from the time of my birth, called me by His grace at a time pleasing to Him. [16]And when He revealed His Son in me, so that I should preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, I did not at once consult some human authority. [17]No, I did not go up to Jerusalem to confer with those who were already apostles before me. But I went to Arabia and, when I came back again, it was to Damascus. [18]Three years later I went to Jerusalem to make the acquaintance of Peter, and I stayed with him fifteen days. [19]But I did not meet any of the other apostles except James, the Lord's brother. [20]As God is my witness, I am not lying when I write these things to you.

21 After that I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. [22]My face was as yet unknown to the Christian congregations of Judea. [23]They knew only by hearsay that "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the Gospel — the faith he once tried to destroy." [24]And they praised God because of me.

CHAPTER 2

Paul's Authority Confirmed by the Council at Jerusalem

THEN, after fourteen years, I went again to Jerusalem, together with Barnabas, and I also took Titus with me. [2]What made me go this time was a revelation that I had had. I laid before them the Gospel as I preached it to the Gentiles, after having first presented it privately to their leaders, for fear that what I was doing, or had done, was misspent energy. [3]But they did not even compel my companion Titus, who was a Greek, to be circumcised. [4]This question came up because of some false brethren who had been smuggled into the meeting secretly, and who slipped in to spy on the freedom that we have in Christ Jesus, so as

to bring us into bondage again. [5]But we did not yield to them even for a moment, in order that the truth of the Gospel might remain yours.

6 Then, with respect to those who were considered the leaders at the Council — it really makes no difference to me what rank they held, and even God is not accepting a man because of his office — they did not contribute anything new to me. [7]Rather, they recognized that I had been commissioned to bring the Gospel to the uncircumcised, even as Peter should bring it to the circumcised. [8]For He who brought success to Peter as an apostle to the circumcised, has also worked through me in behalf of the Gentiles. [9]And then, because James, Cephas and John, all reputed pillars of the Church, now all recognized the grace that was given to me, they gave to Barnabas and to me the right hand of fellowship, with the understanding that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the Jews. [10]They made only one request of us — that we should remember their poor, and that very thing I have diligently tried to do.

Maintained in Dispute with Peter

11 Later, when Cephas (Peter) came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face because he was in the wrong. [12]For before the arrival of some persons who were with James, Peter used to take his meals with the Gentiles. But when they came he withdrew from the tables and kept aloof, for fear of those of the circumcision. [13]And the rest of the Jews joined him in this pretense, and even Barnabas was carried away by their insincerity. [14]But when I saw that their actions were contradictory to the teachings of the Gospel, I spoke to Peter before them all. I said, "If you, a Jew, live like the Gentiles, why do you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

Justification by Faith Defended

15 We are Jews by birth; we are not sinful Gentiles. [16]Yet, because we know that a man is not justified by obey-

ing the Law, but by faith in Christ Jesus, therefore have we believed in Christ Jesus, in order that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by doing the works of the Law. Observance of the Law will not bring justification to any human being.

17 So, if we seek justification through Christ, we find that we ourselves are sinful. But does that mean that Christ becomes a servant of sin? Absolutely not! 18I prove that I am a sinner when I try to build up again things that I had pulled down. 19And, through the Law, I become dead to the Law, so I may now be living for God. 20And, I have been put to death with Christ on the cross, and yet I am still alive, although really it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives within me. The life which I now live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. 21I refuse to ignore the grace of God, and therefore say: If justification is through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.

CHAPTER 3

The Holy Spirit Received by Faith, Not Law

O FOOLISH Galatians, who has bewitched you so that you do not obey the truth? Was not Jesus Christ clearly pictured before your eyes as the Crucified One? 2I wish to learn from you only this one thing: Did you receive the Spirit through obedience to the Law, or through believing the message that you heard? 3Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now reaching perfection in the flesh? 4Have you suffered so much in vain? It really seems so. 5When He gives you the Spirit and works miracles among you, does He do so by means of the works of the Law, or by the call to believe?

The Abrahamic Covenant One of Faith

6 Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him
for justification. [7]You can be sure, then, that it is those who
have faith who are the real sons of Abraham. [8]Scripture fore-
saw that God would justify the Gentiles if they had faith,
and therefore announced the Gospel beforehand to Abraham
in these words, "In you shall all the Gentiles be blessed!"
(*Gen.* 12:3). [9]So it is those who have faith who will share
in the blessings promised the believing Abraham.

The Law Condemns, Faith Justifies

10 On the other hand, everyone who relies on the works
of the Law is under a curse, for Scripture says, "Cursed is
everyone who does not hold fast to all the things written in
the Book of the Law, and do them." (*Deut.* 27:26). [11]Still,
it is clear that no one is justified before God by the Law,
because "the just shall live by faith" (*Hab.* 2:4). [12]The Law,
however, does not rest on faith, but on works — "He who
does them shall live by them" (*Lev.* 18:5). [13]Christ has
ransomed us from the curse of the Law. He became a curse
for us, as Scripture says, "Cursed is everyone that hangs on
a tree" (*Deut.* 21:23).

14 This was done in order that Abraham's blessing might
come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, and that through
faith we might receive the promised gift of the Spirit.
[15]Brethren, let me give an illustration from daily life: When
a man has made his will and it has been confirmed, no one
sets it aside or adds to it. [16]Now, the promises were made to
Abraham and his offspring. God did not say, "And to your
offsprings," as speaking of many, but, referring to One, He
says, "And to your Offspring," meaning Christ.

The Real Function of the Law

17 Therefore, I argue: Since the Law was given four hun-
dred thirty years later, it does not annul the covenant made
previously, so as to cancel the promise in it. [18]And if the in-

heritance comes by the Law, then it no longer comes by promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise.

19 Why, then, have the Law? It was added because of transgressions. It was to operate till the Offspring should come, to whom the promise had been made. It was established by angels through a human lawgiver. 20This intermediary was not alone about it, but God — back of it — is One.

21 Does the Law, then, frustrate the promises of God? No, certainly not. Surely, if a law had been given which could have given spiritual life, then justification would indeed come by that law. 22But, in Scripture, the Law makes all men guilty of sin, so that what was promised, based on faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe in Him.

23 But before the rule of faith came, we were all being kept under the rule of the Law, kept under restraint until the way of faith should be revealed. 24So the Law was our schoolmaster until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

The Believer a Son, Not a Servant

25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under that schoolmaster, 26because you are all now the sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus. 27All of you who were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29But if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, and you are his heirs according to the promise.

CHAPTER 4

Bondage Under Law vs. Freedom Under Christ

AGAIN, let me illustrate: As long as an heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, even though he will

become master of the whole estate. [2]He is placed under guardians and administrators until the date set by his father. [3]So it is with us. When we were children, we were like slaves learning the elements of world knowledge. [4]Then came the fullness of time. God sent forth His Son. He was born of a woman. He was born under the Law. [5]He came to ransom those who were under the Law, to make us sons by adoption. [6]And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts to make us cry, "Father, O Father!" [7]Thus, you are no longer a slave, but a son, and also an heir through God.

The Danger of Return to Bondage

8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were enslaved under "gods" that really did not exist. [9]But now, after you have learned to know God, or rather, after God came to know you as His own, how can you turn back again to the weak and helpless elemental false gods, whose slaves you want to be once more? [10]And therefore, you observe days, months, seasons and years! [11]I am afraid, on your account, that I may have bestowed my labor on you in vain.

Their Former Fellowship and Present Indifference

12 Brethren, I beg of you that you become like me, just as I became like one of you. You did me no wrong. [13]You remember that I was not well when I first preached the Gospel to you? [14]And, though my trouble was a trial to you, you did not despise me or reject me in contempt. Rather, you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus himself. [15]What has become of your blessed good will? I can testify to this, that there was a time when you would have plucked out your eyes, if possible, and would have given them to me.

16 Because I tell you the truth, have I made enemies of you? [17]There are some who pay much attention to you, but for no good purpose. What they desire is to exclude you from me, that you may become zealous about them. [18]It is

always a fine thing to have people interested in you, if it is for a right cause, and not only when I am going to be with you. [19]I think of you as my little children, with whom I am again in pains of childbirth until Christ shall be formed in you! [20]How I wish I could be present with you right now, and could change the tone of my voice, for I am truly perplexed about you.

The Allegory of Isaac and Ishmael

21 Now tell me, you who want the Law as your master, have you not read what the Law says? [22]Scripture tells that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave and one by a free woman. [23]The son of the slave woman was born in a natural way; the son of the free woman came because of God's promise. [24]This story can be allegorized: Let the two women represent the two covenants. Hagar stands for the Old Covenant, which comes to us from Mount Sinai. She bears children to be slaves under the Law. [25]Hagar is, in other words, Mount Sinai in Arabia. She corresponds also to the Jerusalem of today, and both she and her children are in slavery.

26 But our mother is the Jerusalem above, a city of freedom. [27]Remember what Scripture said, "Rejoice, O childless woman, who has never given birth! Shout with joy, you who have had no birth-pains! For the deserted woman has more children than the woman who has a husband" (*Isaiah* 54:1). [28]Brethren, we are, like Isaac, children of promise. [29]And it is now as then. The son who was born according to the course of nature persecutes the son who is born according to the Spirit, now as then. [30]What does Scripture say about it? It says, "Send away the slave-woman and her son, for the son of the slave woman shall in no wise divide the inheritance with the son of the free woman" (*Genesis* 21:10). [31]Brethren, we are not children of the slave woman, but of the free.

CHAPTER 5

Circumcision Means Bondage

CHRIST set us free, that we should be free men.
Stand fast, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of
slavery. [2]And so I, Paul, say to you: If you go and become
circumcised, Christ will not be of any help to you. [3]I warn
you again that if anyone becomes circumcised, he thereby
becomes obliged to keep the whole Law. [4]You who expect
to become justified by means of the Law thereby cut your-
selves off from Christ, and you fall away from grace. [5]It is
by faith, through the Spirit, that we hope for sanctification.
[6]For in Christ neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts
for anything. Faith only brings about the union, faith that
finds expression in love.

Warning Against Judaism

7 You were making progress. Who has been hindering
you from obeying the truth? [8]This persuasion is not from
Him who is calling you. [9]It does not take much yeast to
leaven the whole lump. [10]Still, I have faith in you, in the
Lord, that you will not hold other views, and that the man
who is disturbing you will receive his condemnation, no
matter who he may be. [11]As for me, brethren, if I still ad-
vocated circumcision, why should I be persecuted? No, and
if I did, then the hostility due to the cross would be done
away with. [12]Oh, how I wish that those who are disturbing
you would cut themselves off from you!

The Freedom of Sonship Is by Love, Not License

13 Brethren, you have been called to freedom, but be
careful that this freedom does not become an excuse for sin-
ful gratifications, but rather you should serve one another in
love. [14]In fact, the whole Law can be summarized and ful-
filled in the one command, "You shall love your neighbor

as yourself!" [15]But if you keep on biting and devouring one another, look out lest you destroy one another altogether!

The Works of the Flesh

16 Heed my advice: Walk by the Spirit, and do not in any way yield to the desires of the flesh. [17]For the desires of the flesh are contrary to those of the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against those of flesh. These two are opposed to each other, and therefore you cannot always do what you would or should. [18]But if you let the Spirit lead you, you are not under the Law. [19]The works of the flesh are evident, which are: Adultery, fornication, licentiousness; [20]idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, ill-temper, contentions, dissensions, divisions; [21]envy, murder, drunkenness, carousing, and the like.

The Fruit of Living by the Spirit

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23]meekness and self-control. There is no law against these. [24]Note that it is those who belong to Christ Jesus who have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 Then, if we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. [26]Let us not become conceited, nor should we provoke one another, or envy one another.

CHAPTER 6

The Christian Life Brings Brotherhood, Good Works

BRETHREN, if a man is caught in some wrongdoing, you who are spiritual should set him right in a spirit of gentleness. Be on guard as to yourself, lest you, too, be tempted. [2]Bear one another's burdens, and thus you will fulfill the law of Christ. [3]When a man thinks he is something big, he is really nothing at all; he is fooling himself. [4]Let

each one test his own work; then, if he has any reason for boasting, he can say it to himself alone, and not herald it to another. [5]For everyone of us will have to carry his own load. [6]One who is taught the Word should share with his teacher in every good thing he has.

7 Do not be misled. You cannot fool God. Whatever a man sows, that shall he also reap. [8]If one sows to gratify his own flesh, then from this soil he will reap corruption. But if he sows to the Spirit, then from the Spirit he will reap everlasting life. [9]Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due time we shall reap, if we do not lose courage. [10]So then, whenever we have a chance to do so, let us do good to all men, especially to those who are of one family with us in the faith.

The Christian's Pride Is in the Cross, Not in the Flesh

11 See what large letters I make when writing this letter to you with my own hand. [12]What is it they want, those men who would compel you to be circumcised? They want to make a showing to please the worldly-minded, and they want to escape being persecuted because of the cross of Christ. [13]Even those who themselves are circumcised do not observe the Law, but they want you to be circumcised so that they can boast of your submission.

14 But far be it from me to boast of anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ! On it the world has been crucified to me, and I have been crucified to the world. [15]Circumcision counts for nothing with Christ, and the want of circumcision means nothing to Him. What counts is a new birth.

16 Peace and mercy be upon all who follow this rule, and upon God's true Israel! [17]After this, let no man make trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. [18]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren! Amen.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

PAUL, apostle of Christ Jesus, by the will of God,
to the saints at Ephesus, faithful followers of Christ Jesus.
2Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the
Lord Jesus Christ!

The Church Planned Before Creation

3 Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing
that heaven itself enjoys. 4For even before the world was
made He chose us in Him to be holy and blameless before
Him in love. 5By His good plan and purpose He predes-
tined us to become His sons by adoption through Jesus
Christ. 6And so we praise His glorious mercy, by which He
has made us the objects of His favor through His beloved
Son. 7For it is in Him and through His blood that we have
redemption and obtain forgiveness for our sins. It is all done
in accordance with the riches of His grace. 8This He has
lavished upon us in all wisdom and intelligence. 9Further-
more, He has given us an insight into the mystery of His
will, showing that what He planned in Christ was His own
good purpose. 10His plan was that in the fulness of time all
things in heaven and earth should be headed up in Christ.

The Believer Sealed by the Holy Spirit

11 In Christ we have obtained an inheritance that was
predestined for us according to the plan of Him who in
everything carries out what He wants done. 12His plan for us
was to manifest His glory, for we were the first to believe
in Christ. 13The same applies to you. You have listened to
the Word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation, and you
have been sealed by the Holy Spirit, who was promised.
14He is, then, a guarantee of our inheritance until we shall
receive full possession of it, to the praise of His glory!

The Believer Strengthened by the Knowledge of Jesus Christ

15 I have been told of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and
of the love you have shown to all your fellow Christians.
16Because of this, I do not cease to give thanks for you, and
I make mention of you in my prayers. 17I pray that the God
of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the all-glorious Father,
will give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation through a
knowledge of Him. 18And that your mind may be enlight-
ened so that you can see and understand the hope to which
He has called you, and how gloriously rich is the inheri-
tance promised the Christians.

19 I pray, too, that you may realize how surpassingly
great is His power, available to us who believe, shown in the
mighty working of His power 20when He raised Christ from
the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the highest
heaven. 21Yes, He is above every ruler, authority, power
and lordship, and above every name that is named, not only
in this world but also in the world to come. 22He has put
everything under His feet, and has made Him the Head
over all things for the Church. 23The Church is His Body,
filled by Him who in every respect and everywhere is perfect.

CHAPTER 2

The Believer Once Under Sin

YOU were at one time spiritually dead because
of your shortcomings and sins. 2You then lived in sin, for
you followed the ways of the world and you obeyed the
prince of the powers of darkness, that evil spirit who even
now is at work in the sons of disobedience. 3We were all of
us once among these, and lived in the passions of our flesh.
We satisfied the cravings of our bodies and minds, and were
by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

The Believer Now Saved by Grace

4 But God is so rich in mercy that, because of the
great love He had for us, [5]even when we were spiritually
dead because of our sins, He made us alive again because
of Christ. You have been saved by grace. [6]Because of Christ
Jesus, God has raised us up with Him and reserved a seat
for us near Him in the heavenly home. [7]So, in the coming
ages, He will show us the immeasurable wealth of His mercy,
as seen in His kindness to us for the sake of Christ Jesus.

8 For it is by grace that you have been saved, through
faith. No, this is not your own doing. This is a gift from
God. [9]It is not because of works, lest any man should boast.
[10]We are altogether His workmanship. We were created anew
in Christ Jesus that we should do good works, works that
God planned beforehand for us to do.

Jew and Gentile Now One Body in Christ

11 So, do not forget that you were at one time heathen.
You were called the "uncircumcised" by those who were
circumcised, referring to the circumcision in the flesh, made
by human hands. [12]Remember also that at that time you
were separated from Christ; you were foreigners in the sight
of the people of Israel; you knew nothing about the cove-
nant that God had promised to make; you had nothing to
hope for; you were in the world, yes, but without God.

13 But now you are in union with Christ Jesus. Now you,
who at one time were so far away, have been brought near
through the blood of Christ. [14]For Christ is our Peace. He
has made the two — Jew and Gentile — one. He has bro-
ken down the dividing wall that separated us. [15]By His
death He put an end to the enmity between us. He also put
an end to the Law, with its commandments and decrees. He
did this so as to create in Himself one new man in place of
the two — Jew and Gentile, so making peace. [16]He recon-
ciled both, and put an end to their antagonism by offering
to God His body on the cross.

17 Then He came and preached the Gospel to you who
were so far away and to us who were near, namely, the
Good News of peace — the war was at an end. [18]Through
Him, both of us — Jew and Gentile — may now have access
to the Father in one Spirit. [19]So, you are now no longer for-
eigners or strangers. You are fellow-citizens with the saints.
You are members of God's own family, the Church!

Christ the Chief Cornerstone

20 The Church is built upon the foundation of the apos-
tles and the prophets, and Christ Jesus is Himself the Chief
Cornerstone! [21]The whole structure is bound together in
Him, and grows into a holy Temple, serving the Lord. [22]You,
too, are being built into it with the rest, so that God can
find in you a dwelling-place for His Spirit.

CHAPTER 3

The Believer to Be a Steward of God's Grace

AND why am I a prisoner? It is because I am for
Jesus Christ; it is because of my work for you Gentiles. [2]I
assume that you have heard that God appointed me to be a
steward of His grace intended for you. [3]You know, too,
how He made known His mystery to me by a direct revе-
lation, about which I wrote a brief account once before.
[4]By reading that, you will be able to understand my insight
into this mystery of Christ. [5]It was not disclosed to the sons
of men in other generations as fully as it has now been to
His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. [6]That mystery
is this, that through faith in Christ Jesus, as proclaimed by
the Gospel, the Gentiles are joint-heirs with the Jews, and
are members of the same body, and share the promise with
them.

The Church to Preach the Gospel to All Men

7 I was made a minister of this Gospel, according to the
grace that God gave me and by the exercise of His power.
[8]To me, least of all the saints, this favor was given, namely,
to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ,
[9]and to make all men understand the meaning of this se-
cret, which God, the Creator of all things, kept hidden for
ages. [10]Through the Church the supreme wisdom of God
must now be made known even to the angelic powers of
heaven. [11]Such was His eternal purpose, fulfilled in Christ
Jesus our Lord. [12]And because we are in union with Him
and believe in Him, we have access to God in boldness and
confidence. [13]Do not, then, lose courage because of my suf-
ferings in your behalf, for it all does you honor.

Paul's Intercessory Prayer for the Church

14 So, I bow my knees before the Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ. [15]It is from Him that every family in heaven
and on earth takes its name. [16]So I ask Him, then, that from
His wealth of glory He will give you His Spirit to strengthen
you with power within your heart. [17]I ask also that Christ
may dwell in your heart through faith, and that your roots
may be deep and your foundations strong, because of love.
[18]And that you and all your fellow-Christians may receive
power to grasp the dimensions [19]and to understand Christ's
love, which is really beyond human understanding, so that
you may be filled with the fullness of God.

20 He who exerts His power within us is able to do in
full measure far more than all that we ask for or can think
of. [21]May He be glorified in the Church, through Christ
Jesus, to all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

CHAPTER 4

The Unity of the Spirit

I, A prisoner for the Lord's sake, therefore plead with you to live lives worthy of the calling that has come to you. [2]Be humble, gentle and patient, and put up with one another in love. [3]Be eager to maintain with bonds of peace the unity that the Spirit gives. [4]For there is only one body and one Spirit, as there is only one hope in the call you received; [5]one Lord, one faith, one baptism, [6]one God, the Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all.

Diversity of Gifts; Unity in Christ

7 Still, each one of us has been given grace, measured out as a gift from Christ. [8]As Scripture has stated it, "When He went up on high, He took many captives with Him, and He gave gifts to men" (*Psalm* 68:18). [9]Now, when it reads "He went up," what does that mean except that He had first gone down to the under-regions of the earth? [10]He who descended is also the same as He who ascended. He went up, high above all the heavens, that He might fill all things with His glory.

11 And He appointed some to be apostles, others to be prophets; some to be evangelists, others preachers or teachers. [12]The common object of their labor was to bring the Christians maturity, to prepare them for Christian service and the building up of the Church of Christ, [13]until we all reach the unity of the faith and a fuller knowledge of the Son of God, and attain to maturity, even to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

14 We should no longer be like little children, tossed to and fro before the wind of every doctrine, by the cunning tricks of men, and by their crafty presentation of error as truth. [15]Rather, we should speak the truth in love, so as to grow up in every way into perfect union with Christ, who is

our Head. [16]It is from this Head that the whole body, fitted together and united by every joint and ligament with which it is supplied, gets each part to work properly, develops each part accordingly, and builds itself up through love.

The True Believer Puts off the Old Self

17 I have this to say to you, and I urge this on you in the name of the Lord: Stop living as most of the Gentiles do, guided by the vanity of their minds. [18]Their understanding is darkness itself; ignorance, due to their hardness of heart, has estranged them from the life of God. [19]They have become callous, have abandoned themselves to sensuality, and greedily practice any form of vice that lust can crave.

20 But you did not learn anything like this from Christ. [21]I mean, if you have heard about Him and, as disciples of His, were taught about Him, then you learned the truth as it is found in Jesus. [22]You must put off your old nature and your former habits, for they are corrupt and bring ruin through deceitful lusts. [23]The very spirit of your minds must be renewed continually. [24]You must put on a new self, created in God's likeness, in true righteousness and holiness.

The True Believer Practices Christian Virtues

25 And so, let falsehood be abandoned, and instead let each speak the truth to his neighbor, for we are all parts of the same body. [26]If you become angry, do not let anger lead you into sin. And don't let the sun go down on your wrath. [27]Do not let the devil get that satisfaction. [28]If one has been a thief, he must stop stealing and find employment, and do good work with his hands, so that he may even share with someone who is in need. [29]Let no evil talk come from your lips, but let what you say be of help to others, as the occasion presents itself, so that it may also impart grace to those who listen.

30 Never grieve the Holy Spirit of God, for by Him you were sealed for the day of salvation. [31]Let there be no more

bitterness, and no more anger and wrath among you. Let quarrelings cease, and let slander and spite be put away altogether. 32Be kind to one another, and tenderhearted. Be ready to forgive others, as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

CHAPTER 5

Imitators of God

YOU are God's beloved children; therefore, try to be like Him. 2Let love guide your footsteps, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as an offering and a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God.

Avoid Every Form of Immorality

3 As for fornication and other forms of impurity, and covetousness, these should not even be mentioned among you, for they do not have a place in the lives of saints. 4There must be no filthy or silly talk, and no coarse jesting, for these are not becoming to Christians. Instead, there should be the giving of thanks. 5You must know, surely, that no one who is immoral or impure, or even covetous (which makes him an idolator) — not one of these can have any share in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Avoid and Expose Deceivers

6 Do not let anyone deceive you with worthless arguments. On account of these the wrath of God comes down upon those who do not take heed. 7Therefore, do not associate with them at all. 8There was a time that you were "darkness," but now you are "light," in the Lord. Walk, then, as children of light. 9The fruit of light (the Spirit) can be seen in all that is good and right and true. 10You must learn to do what is pleasing to the Lord.

11 Take no part in the works of darkness; they are profitless. Rather, you should expose and reprove them. 12It is a

shame even to mention some of the things that are done in secret. [13]But light can expose any and all of them. Light thrown on anything can make it visible. [14]The Scripture therefore says, "O you who are sleeping, wake up, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light!" (*Isaiah* 60:1).

Exhortation to Spirit-filled Living

15 Be careful, then, about the way you live. Act wisely, not foolishly. [16]Make good use of your time, because the days are evil. [17]For that reason, try to understand what the Lord wants and do not be foolish in this. [18]Do not get drunk from wine, for that leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit [19]and speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. Yes, sing and make melody to the Lord with all your heart. [20]And always give thanks to God, the Father, for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Duties of Married Believers

21 Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. [22]Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. [23]For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the Head of the Church, which is His Body, and He Himself is its Saviour. [24]But, even as the Church is subject to Christ, so should wives also be subject to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for it. [26]He made it clean by the washing of water and the Word, so as to consecrate it, [27]and to take it to Himself a Church full of splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but holy and faultless in every respect.

28 In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife really loves himself. [29]No man ever hates his own self; He feeds it

and cares for it, even as Christ does for the Church. [30]And we are members of His Body; we are His flesh and bone! [31]For this reason, a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

32 This is a great mystery, but I give it as a picture of Christ and the Church. [33]And as for you, let each one of you love his wife as he loves himself; and let each wife, too, have proper respect for her husband.

CHAPTER 6

Duties of Parents and Children

CHILDREN, obey your parents in the Lord. This is right. [2]It is the first commandment with a promise, and reads, "Honor your father and mother, [3]that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth."

4 And fathers, do not irritate your children, but bring them up in the knowledge and living of Christian truth.

Duties of Masters and Servants

5 Servants, you must obey your earthly masters, with due respect and fear, in sincerity of heart, as for Christ. [6]That is, you should not come with eye-service or try to be men-pleasers, but you should rather be as servants of Christ, doing the will of God with all your heart. [7]Do good work with good will, as for the Lord, and not just for men. [8]And remember that everyone, whether slave or free, will receive his reward from the Lord, in return for whatever good he may do.

9 And you, masters, do the right thing by your servants, too. Stop threatening them, for you must know that their Master and yours is in heaven and He makes no distinction between master and man.

The Christian's Warfare

10 Just one thing more: My brethren, get your strength
from the almighty power of the Lord. 11Put on His whole
armor, so that you may be able to resist the devil's cunning
tactics. 12For our struggle is not so much against wicked
men, but rather against the forces, authorities and master-
spirits that rule this world in its present darkness. Yes, our
war is against the wicked spiritual forces of the underworld
itself.

The Christian's Armor

13 You must, therefore, arm yourself with God's whole
armor. In that way you may be able to make a stand when
the evil day comes and, when it is all over, you will still be
holding your own. 14Stand up, then, put the belt of truth
around your waist, and let righteousness be your breast-
plate. 15Let your feet be shod in readiness to proclaim the
glad tidings of peace. 16And, by all means, take with you the
shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all
the fiery arrows shot by the wicked enemy. 17Make use also
of the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which
is the Word of God.

Prayer — the Christian's Resource

18 Pray much, and at every opportunity. Use every kind
of prayer and entreaty. Pray in the Spirit. Be alert and per-
severing in your supplications in behalf of God's people.
19Pray also for me. Pray that when I open my mouth to
speak, I may have boldness to preach the mystery of the
Gospel. 20I am an ambassador of this Gospel, but in chains.
Pray that I may tell the Gospel story as boldly as is my duty.

Conclusion

21 Now, if you want to know more about me, how I am
and what I am doing, all this you can learn from Brother

Tychicus, a beloved and faithful fellow-servant of the Lord.
[22]I am sending him to you for the very purpose of letting
you know how we are, and to cheer your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brethren, and love, with faith, from
the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ! [24]Grace be with all
who sincerely love our Lord, Jesus Christ! Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

CHAPTER 1

Salutation

FROM Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ,
to all the Christians at Philippi, including the pastors and deacons. [2]Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ!

Paul's Love for the Saints

3 I thank my God for all my memories of you. [4]It is always a joy for me to pray for you [5]because you have taken
a full share in the Gospel work from the first day it came
to you until now. [6]And I am sure of this, that He who began
the good work in you will keep on perfecting it until the day
of Jesus Christ. [7]I think that it is right for me to feel that way
about all of you, because I have you always in my heart and
you have shared God's grace with me, both when I have been
in chains and also when I have been free to defend and vindicate the Gospel. [8]And God knows how I yearn for you all
with the deep love of Christ Jesus himself.

Paul's Prayer for Them

9 My prayer for you is this, that your love may increase
still more and that you may get a greater knowledge and a
deeper understanding. [10]Thus you will always be able to prize
what is excellent, and to be pure and blameless till the day
when Christ shall return. [11]And your lives will be filled with
the fruits of righteousness, all through Jesus Christ and all
to the glory and praise of God.

The Spread of the Gospel Due to Paul's Imprisonment

12 Brethren, I want you to know that what has happened
to me has actually helped to spread the Gospel. [13]It has now
become common knowledge throughout the emperor's guard
and elsewhere that I am in prison for the sake of Christ.

[14]Besides, most of the brethren, on account of my imprisonment, have become more dependent on the Lord and have started to preach oftener and more boldly than ever before.

The Progress in Preaching

15 It seems that some of them are preaching because of envy or partisanship, but there are some, too, who preach Christ because of good will. [16]These last-named do it out of love, for they know that I was poised to defend the Gospel. [17]The first-named, on the other hand, are preaching Christ, not sincerely, but out of ill will to me, that they thereby may add to my pain in prison. [18]What does it really matter? In one way or another, Christ is now being preached, from false motives and from honest motives. I am, therefore, glad that He is being made known, and I shall always be glad because of it.

The Prayers of Intercession

19 Because of your prayers of intercession, and because of the bountiful resources from the Spirit of Jesus Christ, I realize that all this will make for my own welfare. [20]It is my earnest expectation and hope that I may never disgrace myself, but that I shall now, as always hitherto, bravely stand up for Christ and honor Him in my body, no matter whether that means to live for Him, or to die for Him. [21]For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain!

22 But if to keep on living here in this body means that my labor is bearing fruit, then I cannot decide which choice is the better. [23]I am hard pressed between the two. I have had the desire to leave this world and be with Christ, for obviously that would be far better. [24]But for your sakes, it seems more important that I go on living among you. [25]I am fully convinced of this, and therefore I feel sure that I will live a while longer and thus continue to help all of you advance in Christian living, as well as in the joy that comes from faith. [26]So when I come to you again you will have a chance to rejoice more than ever with me in Christ Jesus.

Unity Through Faithful Christian Living

27 No matter what happens, you must live lives worthy
of the Gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come to you or do
not come, may I hear about you that you stand firm, united
in spirit, having one purpose, one faith, working together for
the Gospel cause! 28Never for a moment let your foes frighten
you in any way. Your fearlessness will then be to them a
sign of their own coming defeat, as well as your salvation,
and that all from God himself. 29Now you have been
granted the grace not only to believe in Christ but also to
suffer for Him. 30You are to fight the same fight in which
you have seen me engaged, the same struggle you hear I
still have.

CHAPTER 2

Exhortation to Humility

THEREFORE, if there is any encouragement in
our relationship with Christ, if love gives an incentive, if our
hearts are united by the Spirit and if we have sincere affec-
tions and sympathies, 2then make my joy complete by living
in harmony, by having the same love and by setting your
minds on the same goal. 3Do nothing out of party spirit or
pride. On the contrary, be humble and let each one think of
the other as better than himself. 4Let each one have in mind
not only his own interests but also the welfare of others.

The Humility and Exaltation of Jesus Christ

5 Have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6Though
He had always existed as God, yet He did not grasp at this
equality with God. 7No, He laid it all aside and consented
to take on the nature of a slave and to be born like other
men. 8Then, having become a man, He humiliated Himself
still more, was willing to be put to death, even to die on the
cross.

9 God has therefore exalted Him and has given Him a
name above all other names: 10And so at the name of Jesus
everyone should kneel, whether he is in heaven, or on earth,
or in the underworld. 11And likewise every tongue should
confess that Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

A Demonstrable Faith

12 My beloved, you have always been obedient, not only
when I have been with you but even more so when I have
been absent. So now you must demonstrate your own sal-
vation with fear and trembling. 13It is really God who works
in you, so that you are not only willing but also able to
carry out His loving purposes.

14 Do everything without grumbling or arguing. 15In that
way you may become blameless and faultless, God's inno-
cent children in a crooked and perverted age. And shine
among people like beacon lights in the world. 16You offer
men the Word of Life, so that when the Day of Christ
comes it will be my joy that I did not spend my life in vain,
that my labor was not wasted. 17I am happy about it and,
even if my own lifeblood has to be offered as a sacrificial
token of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. 18In
the same way you, too, should be glad and rejoice with me.

The Coming of Timothy

19 The Lord Jesus willing, I hope to send Timothy to
you before long. I shall then be cheered by receiving news
about you. 20There is no one like him, who is so genuinely
interested in everything that concerns you. 21Most people
seem to have their own interests at heart, but not the busi-
ness of Christ Jesus. 22But you have had proof of his worth,
how like a son helping his father he served together with me
in preaching the Gospel. 23I hope to send him without delay
as soon as I can find out how my own case will turn out.
24And I feel sure that, with the Lord's help, I myself shall
soon come to you.

The Coming of Epaphroditus

25 I believe that it is necessary to send Epaphroditus
also to you. He is a brother to me, my companion in labors,
my comrade in arms, and he is the messenger that you,
yourselves, sent to minister to my needs. 26He has been
homesick for all of you and is worried because you learned
he was ill. 27Indeed, he was very ill — almost to death — but
God had mercy on him. He not only had mercy on him, but
on me, too, so that I should not have this sorrow added to
my other troubles. 28So I am the more eager to send him,
that you may have the joy of seeing him again and I may
have less anxiety. 29So give him a hearty, joyous welcome
in the Lord! Honor such men. 30As for him, he risked his
life to make up what was lacking in your service in my
behalf.

CHAPTER 3

Warning Against Judaizers

ONE more thing, my brethren: Rejoice in the
Lord! To keep on saying this to you is not irksome to me,
and it is necessary for your safety. 2Look out for these who
demand circumcision. They are dogs and evil-doers. 3We
who worship God in the Spirit, we are the truly circumcised,
for we find our salvation in Christ and do not put our trust
in such mutilation of the flesh. 4For my part, I could have
reason to trust in the flesh, also. Indeed, if anyone else
thinks that he can trust in the flesh, I can, too — and more
so. 5I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I was of
the people of Israel, and of the tribe of Benjamin. So I was a
Hebrew, of Hebrew parentage. In relation to the Law, I was
a Pharisee. 6As to zeal, I was a persecutor of the Church.
As to righteousness under the Law, I was blameless.

Knowing Christ As Lord

7 Still, what was counted as gain to me, all this I reckoned as loss because of Christ. [8]Indeed, I certainly consider everything a loss as compared to the priceless worth of knowing Jesus Christ, my Lord. And so, on account of Him I have given up all things and count them as rubbish, in order to gain Christ as my own. [9]I want to be united with Him; I do not want a righteousness based on the Law, but one which comes through faith in Christ — the righteousness that God gives, which is based on faith. [10]I want to know Him and experience the power of His resurrection. I want to share in His sufferings and even to be like Him in His death, [11]so that I, too, may somehow experience the resurrection from the dead.

Looking Toward the Prize

12 No, I have not yet reached that goal. I do not think of myself as already perfect. But I keep pressing on, eager to reach it, because Christ Jesus has claimed me as His own. [13]Brethren, I do not say that I have already reached it. But this one thing I do: I forget what is of the past and turn my mind intently on what lies ahead. [14]Then I press on toward the goal in view, eager for the prize, the heavenly call that God gave through Jesus Christ. [15]So let all of us who have reached spiritual maturity be thus minded. On the other hand, should some of you think otherwise, God will make this plain to you also. [16]But this is important: In so far as we have come to an understanding, let us be guided by that rule. Let us be of one mind.

The Abusers of Christian Freedom

17 Brethren, follow my example, and by this standard mark the conduct of your fellow-Christians. [18]I have told you this before and often, and I tell you now again, even with tears, that there are many who behave as though they hated the cross of Christ. [19]For them the end is destruction.

Their stomach is their god. They take pride in their shame. They are completely absorbed in the things of this world. [20]We, on the contrary, are citizens of the heavenly country, from which we also are awaiting the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. [21]He will take this earthly body of ours and make it new; yes, He will make it to be like His own glorified body. This He can do, for He has the power to make all things obey Him.

CHAPTER 4

Exhortation to Unity and Joy

MY brethren, I love you and long for you. You are my joy and my crown. But stand firm in the Lord, my beloved. [2]I beg Euodoia, and I beg Syntyche, to be reconciled to each other, with the Lord's help. [3]I ask you, too, my true comrades, to help these women. They both have worked hard, helping me spread the Gospel, assisted also by Clement and other fellow-workers whose names are in the book of life. [4]Rejoice in the Lord always! Let me repeat it: Rejoice!

The Secret of the Peace of God

5 Let your forbearance be known to all men. The Lord is near! [6]So do not worry about anything. No matter what the circumstances, pray to God, entreat Him, and give thanks. Tell Him what you need. [7]And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

Holy Thoughts Produce Holy Living

8 And as for the rest, brethren, you should think of these things — whatever is true, honorable, just, pure, lovable, or of good report. In short, if there is anything excellent and worthy of praise, think about it. [9]And do those things that

you have learned from me and have accepted, that you have heard me speak about and seen me do. Practice them and the God of peace will be with you.

Paul's Gratitude Because of the Saints' Concern for Him

10 It has made me very happy in the Lord to find that now, at length, your concern for me has blossomed forth again. I mean, of course, that you were interested in me, but you had no occasion to show it until now. 11And even now I am not saying that I am in actual need, for I have learned to be contented no matter what my circumstances may be. 12I know how to live in poverty and I know how to live in prosperity. I have had experience under any and all conditions, of having enough and going hungry, of living in plenty and living in poverty. 13I can do anything through Christ, who gives me strength.

14 Still, I think that you did the right thing to share my hardships with me. 15And you Philippians know that in the beginning of my Gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, yours was the only church that went into partnership with me in the matter of giving and receiving. 16Even when I was in Thessalonica you twice sent help to meet my needs. 17It is really not the gifts that I crave, but I do look for fruit that may be put to your credit.

18 I now have all that I need, and more than that. I am quite contented, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are like sweet-smelling incense, like a sacrifice acceptable and well-pleasing to God.

19 My God will, in return, supply all your needs out of His glorious riches, through Christ Jesus. 20May glory be to our God and Father for ever and ever! Amen.

21 Greet all the saints in Christ Jesus. All the brethren here with me send you their greeting. 22All the Christians here, especially the believers in Caesar's household, wish to be remembered to you.

23 The grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, be with you all! Amen!

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Thanksgiving

FROM Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by God's
will, and from Brother Timothy, 2to the saints at Colossae,
our faithful brethren in Christ. Grace be to you, and peace,
from God our Father and the Lord, Jesus Christ.

3 When we pray for you, we always thank God, the
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, because of you. 4For we
have heard about your faith in Christ Jesus, and about your
love for all the fellow-Christians. 5We thank God also for
the hope that is stored up for you in heaven. This you first
heard about through the Gospel, which is the Word of Truth.
6The Gospel came to you, even as it is reaching out to the
rest of the world. And it will bring forth fruit everywhere,
just as it already has among you from the very day that
you first heard it and came to know the truth about the grace
of God. 7Since then you have also learned the same from
Epaphras, our beloved co-worker, who is an honest and
faithful minister of Christ. 8It is he who has told us about
your Christian love.

Paul's Seven-fold Prayer

9 We have, therefore, from the day that we first heard
about you, never ceased to pray for you. We have asked
that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will and
that you may have wisdom and spiritual understanding in
every way. 10We pray, too, that your lives may be a credit
to the Lord and pleasing to Him, that you may be fruitful
in every good work you take hold of and that you may in-
crease in your knowledge of God. 11And we asked that you
may receive strength for every task, drawn from His might
and glory, and that you may hold out with patience and
good cheer.

12 We give thanks to the Father for having made us fit to
have a share in the light which is the inheritance of the
saints. 13We thank Him for having rescued us from the pow-
ers of darkness, and giving us a place in the kingdom of
His beloved Son. 14And because through Him (His blood)
we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins, for this we are
thankful.

The Seven Superiorities of Christ

15 Christ is the image of the unseen God. He existed
before creation began. 16For by Him everything was cre-
ated, both in heaven and on earth, things visible and invis-
ible, also thrones and dominions, principalities and powers
— all things were created through Him and for Him. 17He
existed before all things, and all things exist and hold to-
gether through Him. 18He is the head of the body, that is,
the Church. He is the beginning of everything. He is also
the Firstborn from among the dead and so He stands first
in everything. 19It was the Father's pleasure that all fulness
should dwell in Him.

The Reconciling Work of Christ

20 And, through Him, God would reconcile all things to
Himself again, those here on earth and those in heaven, by
making peace through the blood of His cross. 21You were
at one time estranged from Him. You were His enemies.
You were busy doing evil. 22But you are now reconciled
through the death of His body as a man, so that you can
stand before Him holy, without sin, and irreproachable.
23This reconciliation demands, of course, that you continue
in the faith, that you be stable and steadfast, and that you
do not shift away from the Gospel hope that you have
heard preached. It is the Gospel that was once proclaimed,
and is to be proclaimed to the whole creation under heaven,
and I, Paul, have become one of His servants to do it.

The Ministry of the Mystery

24 I find joy in my sufferings for your sake. In this way,
in my own body, I undergo some of the trials of Christ, yet
to come, for the sake of the Church, which is His body. [25]I
am a minister in this Church. It was God who appointed
me to this office, and it was for your sakes. My task was to
make the Word of God fully known. [26]This Word was the
mystery, or secret, that had been hidden from all the ages
and generations of the past, but now is being revealed to
the saints. [27]It is God's will that this mystery shall be fully
explained to all the nations in all its riches and glory. The
mystery is this: That Christ in you is your hope of glory.
[28]He is the One whom we proclaim. We use all the wisdom
we have. We warn everyone; we teach everyone, in order
that we may present everyone mature in Christ Jesus. [29]I am
working for this end, using the strength I receive from Him
who strengthens me with His might.

CHAPTER 2

The Believer's Completeness in Christ

I WISH you to know that I have struggled in-
wardly a great deal in your behalf, as well as for the be-
lievers in Laodicea, and also for all the rest who have not
themselves seen my face. [2]May your hearts be comforted
and may you be knit together by the ties of Christian love!
May your understanding increase in scope and certainty!
May you come to see that the mystery of God the Father
is solved in Christ! [3]It is in Him that all the treasures of
wisdom and knowledge lie hidden.

The Danger of Persuasive Arguments

4 I say this to prevent you from being led astray by per-
suasive arguments to the contrary. [5]You see that though I
am not with you in person, yet I am with you in spirit, and

I am happy to see how orderly you are, and how firm is your faith in Christ. [6]Now, therefore, just as you have accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, may you live in union with Him! [7]May you be rooted in Him and be built up in Him! May you become stronger and yet stronger in the faith, as you were taught it! And may your lives overflow with gratitude!

The Emptiness of Philosophy and Tradition

8 Look out lest somebody catch you unawares by some philosophy or empty deceit. He may set forth some human tradition, or some theory about the nature of the universe, but not the teachings of Christ. [9]Know this, that in Christ all the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily. [10]And you have come to fulness of life through union with Him who is the fountainhead of all authority and power. [11]When you became united to Him you became circumcised with a circumcision not made by hand. In the circumcision of Christ you were set free from your sinful nature. [12]Just as in baptism you were buried with Him, so you were raised again with Him to new life through faith in the power of God who raised Him from the dead.

13 So, when you were spiritually dead because of your sins and your sinful nature, He gave you life again to share with Himself, and He forgave us all our sins. [14]Indeed, He blotted out the handwriting of the Law, for that was against us. He took that out of the way and nailed it to the cross. [15]So by the cross He disarmed the principalities and powers of evil; and in triumph He made a public spectacle of them.

Warning Against Legalism and Asceticism

16 Let no one, therefore, be your judge as to what you may eat or drink, or in the matter of observing feast days and new moons and sabbaths. [17]These things only foreshadow what is to come. The One foreshadowed is Christ. [18]Let no one rob you of your prize. Beware of him who in-

dulges in sham humility and the worship of angels, and who speculates about visions he has had, and is proud in his sensual mind for no good reason at all. [19]Such a one does not hold fast to the Head, on whom the whole body depends. Nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments, it grows with a growth that is from God.

20 If you have died, with Christ, to worldly ways of looking at things, why do you now, as if you still were of the world, submit to its rules, [21]such as, "You must not handle this," or, "You must not taste that," and, "You must not touch that." [22]All these things referred to perish in the using, and all these rules and teachings are man-made and nothing more. [23]Such practices may have the appearance of wisdom. They seem to demand such virtues as self-devotion, self-abasement and self-control of the body. But they have no power to check when the flesh demands its satisfaction.

CHAPTER 3

The Life Hidden in Christ

IF you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. [2]Keep thinking about the things above, and not of the things here on earth. [3]For you have died, so to speak, and your life now is hidden with Christ in God. [4]Christ is the secret of our spiritual life and, when He returns, you also will appear with Him in glory.

The "Old Man" Put Off

5 You must put to death your lower, earthly nature — fornication, impurity, passion, and greed, which are a form of idolatry. [6]All these are sins that bring God's wrath down on those who disobey. [7]You, too, at one time used to live in these sins, and were counted among the sons of disobedience. [8]You must also put off all these: anger, rage,

spite, slander and foul talk. [9]And do not lie to one another. Stop these practices, seeing that you have put off the "old man!"

The "New Man" Put On

10 And now you have put on the "new man!" And he is being renewed from day to day in knowledge and in the likeness of the Creator. [11]Here there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither circumcision nor uncircumcision. No one is a Barbarian or a Scythian, no one is a slave or a free man. Christ is all, and in all.

12 You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved. Therefore, adorn yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. [13]Also, you must be tolerant with one another and be willing to forgive if one should have a complaint against another. Just as the Lord forgave you, so you, too, must forgive. [14]And on top of all these place love, which binds you together in perfect harmony. [15]Let the peace of God rule in your hearts so you can be one body, as was God's purpose in His call to you. And do be thankful!

16 Let the Word of Christ dwell in you in all its richness. Teach and admonish one another in wisdom with psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs. Sing to God with grace in your hearts. [17]And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus and give thanks to God the Father in His name.

Duties of Members of the Family

18 Wives, be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. [19]Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. [20]Children, obey your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord. [21]Fathers, do not provoke your children to resentment, lest they become disheartened.

Duties of Servants

22 Servants, obey your earthly masters in everything, not as though they were watching you or because you were try-

ing to please them, but rather because your heart is sincere and because you fear the Lord. [23]So no matter what the task, do your work heartily, as doing it for the Lord and not for men. [24]And you may be sure that you will receive from the Lord the inheritance as your pay, for you are the servants of the Lord Christ. [25]But the wrongdoer will get punishment for his wrongdoing, without any respect of persons, master or man.

CHAPTER 4

Duties of Masters

MASTERS, treat your servants justly and fairly, remembering that you, too, have a master in heaven.

Exhortation to Prayer and Christian Work

2 Cultivate the habit of praying. Be watchful in it, and give thanks. [3]And by all means, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the Word, so that we may reveal the secret of Christ, on account of which I am now in prison. [4]I want to make this mystery plain to men, and it is my duty to do so. [5]Conduct yourselves wisely towards non-Christians, and make good use of your time. [6]Be gracious in your speech. Let it be, so to say, seasoned with salt. Study to answer each one in a proper way.

Commendation of Workers

7 Tychicus will tell you about my circumstances. He is a beloved brother, a faithful minister and a fellow servant in the Lord. [8]I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and also that he may give your hearts renewed courage. [9]With him I am sending Onesimus, also a faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your own. These two will inform you about everything that has happened here.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow-prisoner, sends greetings to you. So also does Mark, a cousin of Barnabas. You have already received instructions that, if he comes to you, you must welcome him. 11Also Jesus, who is called Justus, greets you. Of the Jewish Christians, these three are the only ones working with me for the kingdom of God, and they have been a great help to me.

12 Epaphras sends his greetings. He is one of you, and a servant of Jesus Christ. He never forgets to pray for you, earnestly beseeching that you may hold out and perfectly carry out God's will in everything. 13I can testify to this, that he has worked hard for you, as well as for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

14 Also Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas want to be remembered to you.

Conclusion

15 Give my greetings to the brethren in Laodicea, and to Nymphas, and to the church in his house.

16 When this letter has been read among you, see to it that it is read also in the church at Laodicea. 17And please say to Archippus, "God called you into His service — Oh, do not fail Him!"

18 I, Paul, write this farewell greeting with my own hand. Remember me, for I am a prisoner. Grace be with you! Amen.

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER 1

Greeting and Thanksgiving

FROM Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church of the Thessalonians, in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 We thank God for all of you at all times and we make mention of you in our prayers. [3]We cannot forget, as we appear before God our Father, how your work came from your faith, how your toil came from your love, and your endurance came from your hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

4 Brethren, we know that God loves you and that He has chosen you. [5]We brought the Gospel to you, not in mere words, but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and with full conviction, and you know how we conducted ourselves among you for your sakes. [6]And you, in turn, followed our example and the example of the Lord. You not only accepted the Word, but you met persecution in so doing, holding out in the Holy Spirit with much joy.

7 In that way you became examples to all believers throughout Macedonia and Greece. [8]Your faith has made the Word of the Lord ring out loud and clear throughout Macedonia and Greece, but not only that — the story of your faith has gone out in every direction so that people know, and we need not say another word. [9]For people now tell us how we came to you, and how you left your idols and turned to God and are now serving the true and living God. [10]And they tell that you are now awaiting the return from heaven of His Son Jesus, whom God raised from the dead, who will deliver us from the coming wrath.

CHAPTER 2

On Unashamed Workmen

YOU yourselves can testify, brethren, that our visit to you was not without results. [2]As you know, we had already been at Philippi. There we had been ill-treated and insulted. But nevertheless, we were bold when God wanted us to preach the Gospel to you, and that in the face of much opposition awaiting us. [3]And as you will remember, we did not make our appeal by advocating false doctrines, nor did we have any impure motives or practice any sort of deceit. [4]But God had deemed us fit to be entrusted with the Gospel, and so we preach it not to please men but to please God, who looks at our hearts.

Paul's Tender Love

5 We have never at any time used words of flattery, as you know, nor did we ever have greedy motives which we attempted to cover up, and God Himself is our witness. [6]And we have never sought praise from men, either from you or from anyone else, although as Christ's apostles we could have made heavy demands. [7]On the contrary, we came among you gently, like a nurse who fondles her own children. [8]Because we longed for you devotedly, we desired nothing better than to bring the Gospel to you, even to give our own lives because you had become so dear to us.

Paul's Independence

9 Brethren, you remember how we worked and toiled. As we preached God's Gospel to you, we worked night and day in order not to be a burden to anyone of you. [10]Both you and God are witnesses to our conduct towards you believers, that it was holy, righteous and blameless. [11]You know how we treated each one of you. As a father dealing with his children we exhorted you and comforted you.

12And we admonished each one of you to lead a life worthy
of God, who is calling you into His own kingdom and glory.

The Thessalonians' Brave Endurance of Persecution

13 We always are thankful to God also for this reason,
that when you accepted the Word of God we preached, you
accepted it not as the word of men but as the Word of God,
for that it really is, and it is now at work in you who be-
lieve. 14Brethren, you became imitators of the churches of
God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. And so you have
suffered the same things from your own countrymen as
those churches had to suffer from the Jews. 15They killed
the Lord Jesus as well as their own prophets. They drove
us before them. They still continue to displease God and
show hostility to all mankind. 16For they try to prohibit us
from preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles. Alas, they are
always piling up their sins to the limit, and God's wrath
will come upon them to the uttermost!

Paul's Hindrances

17 Now, brethren, we have been separated from you
for some time, in person but not in spirit. We have longed
to see you face to face again, and we have tried eagerly to
make that possible. 18Speaking for myself, I, Paul, have tried
to come to you once and again, but Satan has hindered us
from coming. 19When our Lord Jesus Christ returns, what
hope and joy we shall have, what a prize to display before
Him, when it will be such as you! 20Yes, indeed, you are
our glory and our joy!

CHAPTER 3

Timothy's Visit to Thessalonica

SO, when we could no longer bear it, we thought
it best that we should remain in Athens alone. 2And then we
sent Timothy on to you. He is God's servant, our brother

and fellow-worker in the Gospel of Christ. His mission was to strengthen you and to encourage you in the faith. [3]We want no one to lose courage because of his troubles, for even you know that troubles are bound to come. [4]We, too, had warned you of this when we were with you, that trials would soon befall us, and what we said has come to pass, as you know.

5 On this account, when I could no longer bear the suspense, I sent him to you that I might learn about your faith, dreading to think that perhaps the tempter had persuaded you to forsake it, and then our labor would become in vain. [6]Timothy has now returned to us from you. He brings us good news about your faith and love. He tells us also that you always remember us kindly and long to see us, just as we think of you and long to see you once more. [7]These things have cheered us, brethren, in the midst of all our afflictions and needs. Especially the news about your faith has brought cheer. [8]It brings to us renewed life when we hear that you stand firm in the Lord.

Paul's Gratitude to God

9 How can we give God sufficient thanks in your behalf for all the joy you give us as we come before Him? [10]Indeed, we pray early and late that we may see your faces once more and that we may help you in supplying what is lacking in your faith. [11]May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, then, guide our steps to you! [12]May the Lord increase your love toward one another and to all men, and make it overflowing, even as is our love for you! [13]And so may He make your hearts strong, free from fault and holy before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with all His saints!

CHAPTER 4

Exhortation to Moral Purity

FURTHERMORE, brethren, we ask you and beg of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, that you continue to live in a way pleasing to God, so that you may grow more and more. What that way is, we have already made clear to you. [2]You remember what directions we gave you by authority of the Lord Jesus? [3]It is the will of God that you be holy. You must abstain from adultery. [4]Let each one of you see to it that he chooses for himself a wife to be held in sanctity and honor. [5]One must not yield to lustful passions, as the heathen do in their ignorance of God. [6]No one should wrong his brother or defraud him in business, for the Lord is the avenger in such cases. This we have told you before, and have given proofs from life. [7]God's purpose in His call to us is that our way of living should not be sinful, but sinless. [8]Whoever disregards this course of living disregards something more than some man-made ruling; he rejects God who called us and has given us His Holy Spirit to help us.

Exhortation to Brotherly Love

9 Then, with regard to brotherly love, there is really no reason why I should write to you about that, for God Himself has commanded you to love one another. [10]Now you are already extending your love to include all the brethren in the whole land of Macedonia. We urge you, nevertheless, to do still better in every way. [11]We trust that you will strive to live peaceably, minding your own business and working with your own hands. This is advice we have given you on previous occasions. [12]You understand that we want you to command the respect of outsiders, and not to be dependent on anyone.

The Lord's Return

13 Now, brethren, we do not want you to be ignorant in
regard to those who have died. You have no reason to grieve
like the rest who have no hope. 14For if we believe that
Jesus died and rose again, so also will God bring back with
Him those who have died in the Lord. 15And this much we
can tell you from the Word of the Lord, that we who may
be still living when the Lord returns will not in any way
precede those who are already numbered among the dead.
16With a word of command, at a call from the archangel and
at the sound of God's trumpet, the Lord himself will come
down from heaven. Then those who died believing in Christ
will be the first to rise. 17Next, those of us still living shall
be taken up into the clouds, together with the resurrected
dead, to meet the Lord in the sky! After that we shall be
with the Lord forever and ever! 18Encourage and console
one another, therefore, with these words.

CHAPTER 5

The Time of the Lord's Return

AS to the time and season when He is to come,
there is no need, my brethren, for me to write anything to
you. 2For you well know that the Day of the Lord will
come as a thief in the night. 3Some day when people say,
"We have peace and security," destruction will strike them
suddenly, as labor pains come on an expectant mother, and
they shall not escape.

4But you, my brethren, are not in the dark, so that day
should not come on you as a thief by surprise. 5You are all
sons of light, sons of the day. No, we are not of the night,
nor of darkness. 6Then let us not sleep like the rest of
mankind, but let us watch in soberness. 7For those who
sleep do so at night, and those who get drunk do so at

night. [8]And since we are men of the daylight, let us keep sober. Let us put on the breastplate of faith and love. And for a helmet, let us put on the hope of salvation.

9 For God's intention is not to punish us in wrath, but to save us for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. [10]He died for us so that, whether we are awake or taking our sleep, we share our lives with Him. [11]Go on, therefore, encouraging and strengthening one another as you have been doing.

Counsel for Christian Living

12 Brethren, we make this request of you, that you respect those who labor among you, those who are over you in the Lord and teach you the way. [13]You should hold them in high esteem and love them because of their work.

14 Be at peace among yourselves. We earnestly make this appeal to you, brethren: Warn the unruly, encourage the timid, support the weak, be patient with everyone. [15]See to it that no one pays back evil for evil. Try always to find ways to do good to one another and to everybody.

16 Rejoice always. [17]Never stop praying. [18]Give thanks for everything, for God expects this of you all, in Christ Jesus. [19]Do not stifle the voice of the Spirit. [20]Do not disregard the prophecies. [21]Let all things be tested, and hold on to what is right. [22]Avoid every form of wickedness.

Conclusion

23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely! And may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and without reproach till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ! [24]He who calls you can be trusted, and He will not fail you. [25]Brethren, pray for us, too. [26]Greet all the brethren with a holy kiss. [27]In the name of the Lord, I earnestly ask you to have this letter read to all the brethren. [28]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you! Amen.

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO THE THESSALONIANS

CHAPTER 1

Salutation

FROM Paul, Silvanus and Timothy, to the church of the Thessalonians, in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 2Grace and peace be to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. 3It is our duty to thank God always on your behalf, and it is very proper, for your faith has been much strengthened and your love for one another is also on the increase. 4Therefore we speak of you with pride as we visit the churches of God. We call attention to your holding on to your faith in spite of all the persecutions and trials that you have had to meet and bear.

The Return of Christ in Judgment

5 This is a clear proof of God's justice in judging. He wants you to prove yourselves worthy of His kingdom, and so you are suffering for its sake. 6Surely it is right for God to repay with trouble those who trouble you. 7And it is right that He repay with rest those who have suffered, both you and us, when the Lord Jesus will come down from heaven with His angel to make known His power.

8 In flames of fire, He will punish those who do not know God and those who will not accept the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9Their punishment will be everlasting ruin and exclusion from the Lord's presence and from the glory of His power. 10It will take place on the day He shall come to show His glory in His saints, and to be marveled at by all who have believed, because you believed our testimony. 11To this end, you are ever in our prayers. We pray our God, by His power, to make you worthy of His call, to fulfill all His good intentions, and to bless your every work of faith. 12To this end also may the name of our Lord Jesus Christ be glorified in you and you in Him, through the mercy of our God and of the Lord Jesus Christ!

CHAPTER 2

The Coming of the Antichrist

WE have a request to make of you, brethren, as you await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered to meet Him. [2]Do not be alarmed or disturbed by an alleged revelation of the Spirit, or by some remark or letter attributed to us to the effect that the Day of the Lord has already come. [3]Do not let anyone in any way deceive you as to the time, for before the man of sin — the son of destruction — comes on the scene there will be a falling away from the faith. [4]He will oppose everyone, and will exalt himself above every being, over every object of veneration, yes, even above God himself. He will go into the temple of God and take his seat there, and will claim that he is God.

5 When I was among you I mentioned this to you repeatedly. Do you not remember that? [6]You surely realize that there is a power that is now holding him back, but there will come a time when he will be permitted to appear. [7]This "mystery of lawlessness" is evidently already at work, but the evil work is held in check and will be held back until the time when He who now restrains will set aside. [8]And then the lawless man will appear in person. But the Lord Jesus will blast him by the breath of His mouth, and the very majesty of His appearance will bring the power of the evil one to naught!

9 It is through the cunning of Satan that this man of sin will come, and Satan will furnish him with every sort of power and with pretended signs and miracles. [10]He will be equipped with all kinds of wicked deceptions so as to make men perish, all because they refused to love the truth by means of which they could be saved. [11]It is because of this refusal that God will send powerful heresies among them and let them believe lies. [12]At any rate, all will be condemned who do not believe the truth but delight in evil.

Admonition to Stand Fast

13 Brethren, the Lord loves you and we ought always
to thank God for that on your behalf. At the beginning of
our ministry He chose you for salvation, and that meant
also that you were to be sanctified by the Spirit and that you
were to believe the truth. [14]It was by our Gospel preaching
that you received His call, which promised you a share in
the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. [15]Stand firm, then,
brethren, and hold on! Hold to the traditions that we have
taught you, either by our lips or by our letter!

16 Our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father have loved
us and have given us everlasting comfort and good hope,
all through grace. [17]May they comfort your hearts and give
you strength in every good work and word!

CHAPTER 3

A Call to Prayer

AMONG other things, brethren, remember us in
your prayers, that the Word of the Lord may advance and
be triumphant, even as it has fared among you. [2]Pray that
we may be kept free from the snares of perverse and wicked
men, for not all men are of the faith. [3]Remember that the
Lord is faithful and He will give you strength and will guard
you against the evil one. [4]We have faith in the Lord as to
you, and we believe that you are now doing the things that
we urge you to do, and that you will continue to do so.
[5]May the Lord, then, guide your hearts into the love of
God and into the patience of Christ!

Paul's Example of Industry

6 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we are giving
you strict orders that you keep aloof from any brother whose
conduct is disorderly and who ignores the instructions that
we gave him. [7]For you yourselves know that when we were

in your midst our manner of life was orderly, and you should imitate us in that respect. [8]We were not indebted to anyone for our daily bread, for we worked and toiled by night as well as day so as not to be a burden to anyone of you. [9]We did it this way, not because we did not have the right to your support, but because we wanted to give you in our conduct a pattern for you to imitate.

10 So even when we were with you we set up this rule, "If anyone will not work, neither let him eat." [11]Now it has come to our ears that there are some among you whose behavior is unruly, and that they have no work to do but are mere busybodies. [12]We command all such to settle down to work, and exhort them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quietness and earn their own living.

13 Brethren, do not get discouraged when trying to do good. [14]But take note of the man who refuses to do what we order in this letter, and have nothing to do with him so that he may be ashamed of himself. [15]Not that you should look upon him as an enemy. Rather, you should admonish him as a brother.

Conclusion

16 May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way! The Lord be with you all! [17]This greeting I, Paul, am writing with my own hand. It is a sort of signature to every one of my letters, and is in my own handwriting. [18]The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all!

PAUL'S FIRST LETTER TO TIMOTHY

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

FROM Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus, at the command of God, our Saviour, and of the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope. [2]To Timothy, my true son in the faith. Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord!

Warning Against Unsound Teaching

3 When I was setting out for Macedonia I begged you to stay behind in Ephesus. And I still urge you to remain there so that you may warn those who are teaching false doctrines there. [4]They should be asked to stop paying attention to myths and endless pedigrees, both of which lead to controversy. They should rather teach God's plan, which is by faith. [5]The aim of your instruction should be love, a love that issues from a pure heart, a good conscience and a sincere faith. [6]There are some who have missed this mark by turning aside to nonsensical discussions. [7]Some, indeed, pose as teachers of the Law, when in reality they neither understand the words they use nor the things they affirm strongly.

The Value of the Law

8 We know, of course, that the Law is still good, that is, to anyone who uses it in the right way. [9]We know, too, that it was not meant primarily for the upright, but for the immoral and profane. It was intended for those who beat their fathers and mothers, and for those who commit murder. [10]It was for adulterers, sodomites, kidnappers, liars, perjurers, etc. It is, in short, directed against anything and everything that opposes sound moral teaching. [11]The glorious Gospel of our blessed God is sound teaching, and it is that very Gospel that was committed to my trust.

Apostolic Thanksgiving

12 I thank Christ Jesus, our Lord, who has given me the strength for this task and who in the first place considered me reliable and appointed me to this service under Him. 13Before He called me I had been a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent foe. Yet He showed me mercy because I had carried on in ignorance and unbelief. 14And then the grace of our Lord came upon me like a flood, and it gave me the faith and love that comes through union with Christ Jesus.

15 It is a true saying, and worthy of welcome acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. And I was the worst. 16And yet I was shown mercy and I was pardoned, even though I was the foremost sinner. Jesus Christ did this to me to demonstrate how vast is His patience, which is a pattern for those who would later believe in Him, to win eternal life. 17And now, to the King of the ages — the immortal, invisible, the all-wise God — be honor and glory throughout the endless ages! Amen!

The Good Fight of Faith

18 Timothy, my son, I am assigning to you this charge. It is in harmony with prophecies that have previously been made about you. So let these prophecies help you to fight a good fight. 19And hold on to your faith; have a good conscience! Some, by not paying attention to these two things, have had their faith shipwrecked. 20This happened to Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I had to give up to Satan as a punishment for blaspheming.

CHAPTER 2

The Place of Prayer in Worship

FIRST of all, then, I urge you to pray for all mankind, in the form of earnest requests, humble entreaties, intercessions and thanksgivings. 2You should pray for kings

and all those in authority, so that we may live calm and peaceful lives, in perfect piety and soberness. [3]This sort of prayer is good and acceptable in the eyes of God, our Saviour. [4]For He wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. [5]There is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. [6]He gave Himself as a ransom for us all, an event that will always have its own place of witnessing down through the ages to come. [7]Of this event I, too, am a witness, a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the true faith to the Gentiles. In Christ's name, I am telling the truth; I am not lying.

The Place of Women in Worship

8 I want the men everywhere, then, to be men of prayer. They should lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or argument. [9]Similarly, the women should be dressed modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair, gold, pearls or costly clothing. [10]Good deeds are the most becoming adornments of women who profess to be God-fearing.

11 Let the women learn quietly and be under authority. [12]I would not permit a woman to teach or to have rule over a man. On the contrary, she is to be quiet. [13]It was Adam who was created first, then Eve. [14]It was not Adam who was deceived by the serpent, but the woman. And when she was deceived, sin came. [15]And yet, through her child-bearing, salvation has come. And women will be saved if they continue in the faith. They should also be loving and holy, as well as modest.

CHAPTER 3

The Qualifications of Bishops

THIS is a true saying, "Whoever aspires to church office seeks a noble task." [2]The pastor should be a man of irreproachable character, and never have more than

one wife. He should be a temperate man, sensible, dignified, hospitable and able to teach. 3He must not be a drunkard. He must not be quarrelsome, but rather, he should be gentle. He should not be greedy for money. 4He should know how to manage his own household well, winning the obedience and respect of his own children. 5How can one look after the affairs of one of God's congregations if he can not superintend his own home affairs? 6He should not be a recent convert, for he might get puffed up with conceit and then incur the same doom as the devil once did. 7He should, in addition, have a good reputation in general, or else he might fall into disrepute and the snares of the devil.

The Qualifications of Deacons

8 Deacons, similarly, should be serious-minded. They should be straight-forward and reliable, not addicted to drinking, not greedy for gain. 9They should accept and hold to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. 10Naturally, they should first serve through a period of testing; and then, if they have proved themselves worthy, they may be appointed as deacons. 11The wives of the deacons should, likewise, have a serious outlook, and not be gossips. They should be temperate and faithful in everything. 12Deacons, too, must have only one wife at a time, and should have well-behaved children and well-ordered households. 13Those who do good service as deacons win for themselves a good reputation, and gain also a greater hold on their faith in Christ Jesus.

The Mystery of Godliness

14 Although hoping to come to you before long, I am nevertheless writing to you now. 15In case I am delayed in coming, you may know from this letter how one should behave in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. 16Very important indeed is the hidden truth of godliness. God was manifested

in the flesh, was vindicated by the Holy Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world and was received up into glory.

CHAPTER 4

Concerning Apostasy

THE Spirit says clearly that in later times some will turn away from the faith. They will listen to lying spirits and accept the doctrines of devils. [2]They will be taught by men who are lying hypocrites, whose own consciences are burned out. [3]For instance, they forbid marriage and the eating of meats, food that God made to be eaten with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. [4]Truly, everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if received with thanksgiving. [5]For it is made clean by the Word of God and prayer.

Concerning Godliness

6 Put this matter before the brethren, and you will be a good servant of Jesus Christ, nourished by the words of the faith and by the good teaching which you have so faithfully practiced. [7]But have nothing to do with godless tales and old wives' fables. Train yourselves rather in godliness. [8]Physical exercise is profitable to some extent, but godliness is profitable in every way, as it holds a promise for the life that now is and also for the life that is to come. [9]This saying is true and absolutely trustworthy. [10]It is on this account that we toil and strive, since our hope is fixed on the living God, the Saviour of all men, especially of those who believe.

Concerning Teaching

11 These things you must command and teach. [12]Do not let anyone look down on you because of your youthfulness, but make yourself a pattern for the believers in speech, con-

duct, love, faith and chastity. 13Be busy with reading, preaching and teaching till I come. 14You were given a special gift — given you through prophecy and confirmed by the elders when they laid their hands on you. Make good use of this gift. 15Make a study of these things. Let them be your life. Your progress will then be seen readily by everyone. 16Pay special attention always to your conduct and your teaching, for by so doing you will save both yourself and those who hear your message.

CHAPTER 5

Concerning Widows

DO not rebuke sharply an older man, but talk to him, rather, as to your father. And treat younger men as your brothers. 2In like manner, deal with older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, in perfect chastity. 3Provide for widows who are truly widowed. 4If a widow has children or grandchildren, these should first learn to be dutiful to their own family and to pay back something of what they owe their parents, for God looks with favor on such action. 5Now a widow who is a true widow, when left alone, sets her hope in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day. 6On the other hand, if she lives only for her own pleasure, she is spiritually dead even when still alive. 7Give the following rule, to avoid abuses: 8Anyone who does not provide for his own relatives, and especially his own family, has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.

9 To be put on the list of widows, a woman must have reached the age of sixty years at least, and must have been the wife of only one man. 10She must also have a reputation for doing good deeds, for having brought up her children properly, for showing hospitality, for having washed the feet of fellow-Christians, for having given relief to the oppressed and for having devoted herself to every charitable cause.

11 But as to the younger widows, do not enroll them. They will naturally want to marry again and thus rebel against Christ. 12Thus they become guilty of breaking their first promise. 13They stand in danger also of learning habits of idleness as they go about visiting their neighbors. It is not that they are merely idle, but they are also gossips and busy-bodies, and say a lot of things they have no right to say.

14 My advice is, therefore, that younger women should marry. They should bear children and have a household to manage. In this way they will not give our foes any occasion to speak ill of us.

15 Already there are some widows who have turned aside to follow Satan. 16If any Christian (man or woman) has any widows related to him, let him come to their aid. The Church will then not be burdened, but will be free to assist real widows who have no support.

Concerning Elders

17 Elders who manage well should be considered worthy of a double reward, especially those who work at preaching and teaching. 18"You must not muzzle an ox when he is treading out your grain," is a command of Scripture. And Scripture says also: "A laborer deserves to get his pay."

19 Never listen to an accusation against an elder, except on the evidence brought by two or three witnesses. 20Rebuke publicly those who are guilty of sinning, that the rest may stand in fear. 21You should observe these rules without discrimination, and all that you do should be free from partiality. I earnestly charge you with this duty, as before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the chosen angels. 22Do not ordain a man in haste, and do not take part in other men's sins. Keep yourself pure.

23 No longer drink water only, but use a little wine for the good of your stomach and for your frequent illnesses. 24The sins of some men are perfectly clear to all, and bring judgment upon the sinners. In the case of others, their sins

show up later. [25]It is so with good deeds, too. They are usually readily seen, and even when they cannot be seen, they cannot be wholly concealed.

CHAPTER 6

Concerning Servants

SERVANTS who are under some yoke should treat their masters with the highest respect, so that God's name and our teaching may not be dishonored. [2]And if they have Christian masters, they must not think the less of them just because they are their brethren. On the contrary, they should give them still better service because they are just that — they are believers and beloved. Teach this! Preach it!

Godliness Is Great Gain

3 Some man may teach a different doctrine. He may refuse to accept the sound teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, which teachings lead to godliness. [4]Such a man is nothing but a conceited ignoramus. He loves speculations and controversies about words. Out of his efforts come jealousy, strife, abuse and wicked suspicions. [5]In short, the result is a perpetual and perverse wrangling by men of corrupt minds. With respect to truth they are destitute, and yet they seem sure that godliness is a means of gain. Keep aloof from such teachers.

6 True godliness is a great gain, when it includes contentment. [7]We came into this world empty-handed and it is certain that we must leave it the same way. [8]But we get food and clothing while here below, so why not be content? [9]Those who long for riches fall into temptation, into snares and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin here and into perdition hereafter. [10]The love of money is the root of every kind of evil, and some men, by

striving to make money, have been seduced from their faith and have been pierced through and through with many heart-pangs.

The Importance of Christian Determination

11 But you, O man of God, must shun all this. Not riches, but uprightness must be your aim, and such things as godliness, faith, love, patience and meekness. 12Fight the good fight of faith. Keep your hold on eternal life, for you were called to this end and you made a noble profession of loyalty before many witnesses.

13 I stand before God, who gives life to all creatures, and before Christ Jesus, who made a good witness before Pontius Pilate. 14And I charge you to fulfill your commission, stainless and above reproach, until our Lord Jesus Christ shall make His appearance. 15Yes, God will reveal Him in His own time as the blessed and only Ruler, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. 16He is the only source of immortality. He lives in a house of unapproachable light. No human eye has ever seen Him, or can see Him. To Him be honor and everlasting dominion! Amen!

Final Exhortations

17 Tell the rich of this world not to be haughty, not to put their trust in such uncertain things as riches, but rather to put their trust in the living God, who gives us in full measure everything that we enjoy. 18Tell them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, to give generously, to be ready to sympathize with the unfortunate. 19Tell them that by so doing they will make ready for themselves a sure foundation for the future, and the life that is life indeed may be theirs at last.

20 O Timothy, be faithful to the trust that has been given to you! Avoid the godless, useless babblings and contradictions of pseudo-science. 21Some, by accepting it, have missed the mark as regards the faith. Grace be to you!

PAUL'S SECOND LETTER TO TIMOTHY

CHAPTER 1

Introduction and Greeting

FROM Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in accordance with the promise of the life that is to be had in Christ Jesus. [2]To Timothy, my beloved son. Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord!

Timothy and His Task

3 Like my fathers, I worship God, and it is with a good conscience. And I thank Him when I remember you, as I always do in my prayers, night and day. [4]As I recall your tears, a longing comes upon me to see you once more, for that would fill my soul with joy. [5]I am reminded of the sincere faith that you had, a faith like that which first dwelt in your grandmother, Lois, and then in your mother, Eunice, and I feel sure that it must be in you, too.

6 For that reason I would remind you to rekindle the inner fire which God gave you when I ordained you. [7]And note that the spirit that God gives us is not one of cowardice, but of power and love and wise discretion. [8]So do not be ashamed to bear witness about the Lord, nor to tell about me, for I am in prison on His account. Come, join me in suffering for the Gospel, with the power of God to back us. [9]Has He not saved us? Has He not called us into this holy service? This He did, not because of our good works, but because of His own design and because of the grace He would give us in Christ Jesus, planned before the beginning of time. [10]This plan has now been made clear to us in the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ. Through the Gospel it has been brought to light that we need not die, but that in Him we can live, yes, live forever!

Paul's Prison Testimony

11 I, too, have been appointed a Gospel preacher, an
apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12And it is for this
cause that I am now suffering these things. Still, I am not
ashamed of being in prison. I know the Saviour in whom I
have believed, and I am convinced that my work which I
have given back into His care will be kept safe until
that day. 13Now, keep my words as you have heard them
from me, in the form I gave them, in the faith and love of
Christ Jesus. 14Through the Holy Spirit who lives within us,
guard the good treasure that has been entrusted to you.

Faithful Onesiphorus

15 You have no doubt heard that all the followers in
Asia province have turned their backs on me. This includes
also Phygellus and Hermogenes. 16But Onesiphorus was not
ashamed of my chains, for he came often to cheer me. May
the Lord grant mercy to him and his household! 17And when
he came to Rome he searched for me diligently until he
found me. 18May the Lord grant that he may find the Lord's
mercy on that day! You already know a great deal about
what he did for me at Ephesus.

CHAPTER 2

Exhortation to Be a Good Soldier

YOU, my son, must therefore find strength in the
grace that comes from union with Christ Jesus. 2Then, what
you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses
you must give into the keeping of faithful men, who in turn
will be able to teach others also. 3You must also take your
share of hard sufferings as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.
4You know that when a soldier serves in the army he cannot
entangle himself in the affairs of civilian life, for he will want
to please the man who enlisted him as a soldier. 5You know,

too, that an athlete who competes in the games is not crowned victor unless he competes according to the rules. 6And, again, is not the farmer who works in the field also entitled to the first share of the fruits? 7Think over what I say, and the Lord will give you understanding in every situation.

Paul a Prisoner But the Message Free

8 Now remember that Jesus Christ, with David as a human ancestor, was raised from the dead, according to my Gospel. 9For preaching this, I have had to suffer hardships. I have even been put in chains as an ordinary criminal. The Word of God, however, is not in chains! 10So I am ready to undergo anything for the sake of God's chosen ones, so that they may win salvation through Christ Jesus, and the everlasting glory that follows. 11This saying can be relied on: "If we die with Him, we shall also live with Him!" 12Also, "If we endure with Him, we shall also reign with Him!" And, "If we deny Him, He will also deny us!" 13And this too: "If we prove faithless, yet will He remain faithful, for He cannot deny His own nature!"

Controversies to Be Shunned

14 Remind men of these things and tell them, as before the Lord, not to dispute about words. Such quarreling does no good, but rather unsettles the minds of the listeners. 15Do your best to present yourself before God worthy of His approval, as a workman who does not need to be ashamed of his work, as one who is correct in his analysis of the Word of truth. 16But stand aloof from godless and idle chatter, for it will make people more and more godless. 17Such talk will eat its way like gangrene, as it did to Hymenaeus and Philetus. 18How they missed the mark as to the truth can be seen in this, that they believed that the resurrection had already taken place. And, in consequence, they are upsetting the faith of some.

19 Nevertheless, God's foundation stands firm, and it bears these seals: "The Lord knows those who are His," and "Let everyone who speaks the name of the Lord quit sinning!"

Christian Virtues to Be Promoted

20 In any big house there are many kinds of utensils, not only made of gold or silver, but also of wood and earthenware. Some are put to the more noble uses, while others to the more common. 21Therefore if a man will cleanse himself from what is common, he will become a vessel for noble use, set apart and of use even to the master of the house: yes, fit for any good purpose.

22 Flee from the passions of youth. Seek righteousness, faith, love and peace. Do this in fellowship with such as call on the Lord with a pure heart. 23Do not take part in discussions that are aimless and uncontrolled, for you know that they can cause much strife. 24It is not fitting that a servant of the Lord should be quarrelsome. No, but he should be kind to everyone, ready to teach them and ready to overlook grievances. 25He should discipline the unruly with gentleness, in the hope that God may give them a change of heart so that they will accept the truth. 26They will then come to their senses and escape the snares of the devil, who has held them captive to do his will.

CHAPTER 3

The Apostasy Predicted

YOU must understand that in the last days the times will be dangerous. 2Men will then be lovers of self and lovers of money. They will be boastful, proud and abusive. They will be disobedient to parents, ungrateful and irreverent. 3They will lack the natural affections. They will be irreconcilable, slanderous and profligate. They will be brutal

and hostile to what is good. [4]They will also be treacherous, reckless and conceited, and they will love pleasures far beyond their love of God. [5]True, they will keep up a form of religion, but they will at the same time resist its power over them. Listen! Keep away from these people!

6 Among their number will be men who will go from house to house to captivate women who are morally weak, burdened with sins and swayed by many lustful cravings. [7]They are always willing to learn, yet they can never come to know what is truth.

8 Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so do these oppose the truth. These are men of utterly corrupt minds and of worse-than-useless faith. [9]Fortunately, they will not get very far, for their folly will be made clear to all, as was that of the two who opposed Moses.

The Scriptures, the Believers' Resource

10 You have closely followed my teaching, also my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my endurance. [11]You know about my persecutions and sufferings, such as came to me at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. What terrible persecution I had to live through! And yet the Lord rescued me from all of it! [12]Indeed, all who try to live a truly Christian life will meet with persecution. [13]Wicked men and pretenders, on the other hand, will keep on going from bad to worse, and they will not only mislead others but they will also themselves be misled.

14 As for yourself, hold fast to what you have learned and what you know is true, and remember from whom you have learned it. [15]From your early childhood you have been familiar with the sacred Scriptures, which can make you wise to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. [16]All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in doing what is right. [17]It is intended to make the man of God perfect, fully equipped for any good work.

CHAPTER 4

The Diligence of the Faithful Servant

NOW, in the presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, who will be the Judge of the living and the dead at His return and in His Kingdom — I give you your commission. [2]Preach the Word! Be urgent about it at all times and everywhere. Convince, reprove, encourage, never losing your patience, always trying to teach the Word.

3 For there will come a time when men will not tolerate sound doctrine. They will then gather about them teachers who will play up to their wants and tickle their itching fancies. [4]And they will turn away from listening to the truth and turn aside to fable-lore. [5]But you must always be soberly watchful in everything. You must stand up under hardships and do your work telling the Good News. You must fulfill your ministry.

6 As for me, I am soon through. My lifeblood, as it were, is being poured out and the time of my leaving is at hand. [7]But I have fought the good fight. I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. [8]Now the crown of righteousness awaits me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me when that day comes — yet not only to me, but also to all those who have loved Him and longed for His appearing.

Personal, Concerning Friends and Foes

9 Try hard to come to me soon. [10]Demas, out of love for this present world, has left me and is now in Thessalonica. And Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. [11]Only Luke is with me now. Get Mark to come along with you, for he can be of great help to me. [12]I have now sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

13 I left a cloak in Troas with Carpus. Bring it along when you come. Take along also the books, and especially the parchment rolls. [14]Alexander, the coppersmith, has done

many wicked things against me, for which the Lord will repay in full measure. [15]You must be on your guard against him, for he is violent in his attacks on our teaching.

16 At my first trial no one took my part, but everybody deserted me. May this not be held against them! [17]The Lord, however, was at my side. He gave me strength so that through me the Gospel message might be proclaimed in its fullness, to go out to all the Gentiles. And I was rescued from the lion's mouth. [18]The Lord will henceforth protect me from every wicked scheme and keep me safe for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be everlasting glory! Amen!

Conclusion

19 Give my love to Prisca and Aquila, and the folks with Onesiphorus. [20]Erasmus remained behind at Corinth, and I left Trophimus behind at Miletus. He was ill. [21]Do your best to come before winter sets in. Eubulus wants to greet you. So also do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brethren. [22]The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be to you! Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO TITUS

CHAPTER 1

Salutation

FROM Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, sent to further the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth that accords with godliness. 2Sent also in the hope of everlasting life, which God, who cannot lie, already promised before the beginning of time. 3At the proper time He made this known through His Word, which I, by the command of God, our Saviour, have been commissioned to preach. 4To Titus, my true son, sharing a common faith. Grace and peace be to you from God the Father and the Lord Christ Jesus, our Saviour!

Qualifications for the Ministry

5 The reason why I left you behind in Crete was that you might put things in order where something was still lacking. You were also to appoint elders in every town, a duty that I laid upon you. 6Such men should have a reputation beyond reproach, should have only one wife, and their children should be believers, not open to charges of reckless living and unwillingness to obey. 7A bishop is one of God's stewards, and it is altogether fitting that he be a man of blameless character. He must not be obstinate or quick-tempered. He must not be a lover of wine. He must not be ever ready to come to blows. He must not be addicted to dishonest gain. 8He must be hospitable and a lover of what is good. He must have common sense, as well as be upright, pure and temperate. 9And he must hold fast to the true teaching of the Word so that he can, on the one hand, give encouragement with sound teaching and, on the other hand, he can overcome the arguments of those who oppose sound doctrine.

Concerning False Teachers

10 There are many people, especially among the Jews,
who do not readily submit to authority. They can talk with-
out saying anything worthwhile, and they can deceive even
their own minds. 11These must be silenced. For the sake of
base profit, they upset whole families by teaching things
which they should not. 12One of their own prophets — a
Cretan — has said: "Cretans always lie. They are wicked
beasts. They love to eat and are lazy." 13This opinion of
them is true enough. Therefore it is up to you to reprimand
them strictly, and then win them over to a sound faith. 14Pay
no attention to fables of Jewish origin, or their man-made
rules of life which lead away from the truth. 15To the pure
in heart all things are pure, but to the impure and unbe-
lieving nothing is pure. Their very minds and consciences
are corrupt. 16They say that they know God, while by their
actions they deny Him. They are detestable and disobedient,
and are found worthless in every good task.

CHAPTER 2

Hold to Sound Doctrine

TEACH only what measures up to sound doc-
trine. 2The older men ought to be temperate, serious and
sensible. They should be of sound faith, love and patience.
3The elderly women, likewise, should be reverent in their be-
havior. They should not speak evil of others or become
slaves to drink. They should be teachers of what is right.

Duties of the Young

4 Let the younger women be trained by the older women
to love their husbands and children. 5Also to be sensible,
chaste, homemakers, good and obedient to their husbands,
so as not to bring the Word of God into disrepute. 6Urge
the younger men, in like manner, to be sensible. 7Let them

see in you a model of a noble life from every angle. In your teaching be sound, sincere and serious. [8]Your message should be true, your language correct and not open to criticism. In that way your opponent may be put to shame, for he can find nothing bad to say about you.

Duties in General

9 Servants should obey their masters and try to please them in every task without argument. [10]They must not steal from them, not even little things, but must prove perfectly trustworthy in everything to the credit of the teaching of our God, the Saviour.

11 The grace of God has now come, offering salvation to everyone. [12]It teaches us to give up all ungodly ways and worldly desires. It urges us to live orderly, upright and godly lives in this world. [13]We are to wait for the fulfillment of our blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Christ Jesus. [14]He gave Himself for us in order to ransom us from all wickedness and to make for Himself a people purified and eager to do good deeds.

15 These things you must teach and urge upon them, and make clear to them with full authority. Let no one disregard you.

CHAPTER 3

Pastoral Work, Continued

YOU must remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient and ready for every good work. [2]They must not speak evil of anyone, or be quarrelsome. They must be courteous and gentle in behavior to everyone.

3 There was a time when we, too, carried on foolishly. We were disobedient and deluded. We were slaves of all sorts of passions and pleasures. We passed our days in malice and envy. Men hated us, and we hated in return. [4]But

then there dawned on us the kindness of God, our Saviour, and His love to man. [5]He saved us, not because we had done works of righteousness, but He saved us through a bathing of regeneration and a renewing by the Holy Spirit, [6]who was given to us freely for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. [7]As a result we are justified by His grace and have been made heirs of eternal life, to which we look forward in hope.

8 What I say is true and trustworthy, and I would have you insist on these things. It will help those who believe in God to get busy and do good. And this is the right thing to do and of benefit to mankind.

Concluding Instructions

9 Take no part in foolish controversies, pedigrees, strifes and contentions about the Law. They are useless and vain. [10]After one or two admonitions, refuse to have anything to do with a man who wants to start factions. [11]You can be sure that he is perverted and sinful, and that he himself knows it.

12 I will send either Artemas or Tychicus to you. When I do so, do your best to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. [13]See to it that Zenas, the lawyer, and Apollos get a hearty send-off on their journey, and that they do not lack anything. [14]And, once more, see to it that our people learn to find honest work, so as to provide for their own needs, and so as not to be unfruitful in helping others.

15 All who are with me here send greetings to you. And give our greetings also to all who love us in the faith. Grace be with you all! Amen.

PAUL'S LETTER TO PHILEMON

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

FROM Paul, a prisoner because of Christ Jesus,
and Brother Timothy, to Philemon, our beloved fellow-
worker. 2Also to our sister, Apphia, and our fellow-soldier,
Archippus, and to the congregation in your house. 3Grace
and peace be to you from God our Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ!

The Character of Philemon

4 I am always thankful to God when I make mention of
you in my prayers. 5I do this because I hear of your love
for the Lord Jesus and for all the Christians, and also for
your faith in Him. 6And I, therefore, pray that this faith,
which you have in common with them, may bring about a
better understanding of all the blessings that you have in
Christ Jesus. 7Yes, brother, I have felt very grateful and
have been much encouraged because of your love, and you
have likewise cheered the hearts of God's people.

The Status of Onesimus

8 I could now, through union with Christ, boldly com-
mand you to do what should be done. 9Nevertheless, my ar-
gument will be that you do it for love's sake. I am none less
than Paul the aged, now in prison for the sake of Jesus
Christ. 10I am pleading for my son Onesimus, for I have be-
come his spiritual father here in my imprisonment. 11He was
once your slave, but was of no service to you. But now he
will be of use both to you and to me, and I am sending him
back to you.

12 Wherefore, receive him. He is, as it were, a part of
me, an innermost part. 13I should have liked to keep him
with me, to serve me on your behalf while I am here in
prison for the sake of the Gospel. 14Still, I did not want to

do anything about it without consulting you first, in order that what you decide to do might be of your own free will, and not of necessity. [15]Perhaps he was separated from you for a while so that you might get him back permanently. [16]But please don't regard him as a slave; he is far more than that. He is a dearly-loved brother, especially to me. He should be even much more than that to you, for he is not only your property, but a fellow-Christian.

The Appeal for Onesimus

17 Now then, if you consider me as a bosom friend, receive him as you would receive me. [18]If he has wronged you in any way, or if he is in debt to you, please charge that to my account. [19]I, Paul, write this with my own hand; I shall pay his account. By the way — I really should not mention it — you, yourself, are indebted to me for your very life. [20]Yes, indeed, brother. So, let me make something out of you, in the Lord. Do cheer me up by this Christian act! [21]I have written to you, feeling sure that you will obey me; in fact, knowing that you will do even more than I have asked for.

Conclusion

22 At the same time I want to ask you to find lodging for me, too, for I hope that through your prayers I shall be restored to you. [23]Epaphras, my fellow-prisoner in Christ Jesus, sends you his best regards. [24]Mark also greets you, and so do Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow-workers. [25]The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit! Amen.

CHAPTER 1

The Son Better Than the Prophets

IN days of old, God spoke at different times and in different ways to our fathers, through the prophets. [2]Now at last, in these days, God has been speaking to us through His Son! And He has been given everything for a heritage, even as it was through Him that the universe was created. [3]He is the radiance of God's glory, and the exact image of God's nature. He upholds all creation by His almighty Word. He himself made atonement for our sins, and then sat down on the right hand of God the Father on high.

The Son Better Than the Angels

4 He is as much superior to the angels as the name that was given Him is more excellent than theirs. [5]Did God ever say to one of the angels, "You are My Son. Today I have begotten You"? [6]And again, has He said, "I will be His Father, and He shall be My Son"? And again, when He brought the First-born into the world, He said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." [7]But in speaking of the angels He says, "He makes His angels to be like winds, His servants to be like flames of fire." [8]And of the Son, he says, "O God, Your throne is from everlasting to everlasting. The scepter of Your kingdom is a righteous one. [9]You have loved what is right and hated what is wrong. So God, Your God, has for that reason anointed You with the oil of gladness and set You above Your companions." [10]He has also said, "O Lord, You founded the earth in the beginning and the heavens are made by Your hands. [11]They shall perish but You will always remain. They shall grow old like a garment. [12]You will fold them up like a robe and they will be changed. But You will remain the same, and Your years will never end." [13]But to what angel has He ever said, "Take Your

seat at My right hand, while I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet"? [14]Now, what are the angels? Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve those who are to inherit salvation?

CHAPTER 2

The Importance of This Message

WE must, therefore, pay all the more attention to what we have heard, so we won't drift away. [2]Thus, the messages spoken by angels have proved to be valid, and every violation of God's law, or neglect of it has met with a just punishment. [3]How can we now escape if we neglect so great a salvation that is before us? It was announced to us first by the Lord himself and was confirmed by those who heard Him. [4]God has also confirmed their testimony by signs and wonders and various miracles, and also by gifts of the Holy Spirit, distributed as He saw fit.

Jesus, the God-Man

5 We are now speaking of the habitable world that is to come. God has not put this into the hands of angels. [6]There is a Scripture passage that says, "What is man, since You are concerned about him? Or the son of man, that You look out for him? [7]You made him to be lower than the angels for a little while, yet You crowned him with glory and honor. [8]You put all things in subjection to him — under his feet." That is, in making man ruler over all things God did not leave anything outside of man's control. But as things now stand we do not yet see everything in subjection to him (*Psalm* 8:4-6). [9]But we do see Jesus, who for a little while was made lower than the angels, crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death. He tasted the bitterness of death for every one of us by the grace of God!

Jesus, Our Brother

10 God is the end as well as the beginning and preservation of all things. In order to bring the sons of men to glory,
He has thought it fitting to make the Leader of their salvation achieve perfection through suffering. 11Now, both He
who sanctifies them and those who are sanctified have all one
common origin. On that account He is not ashamed to call
them brethren. 12He says, for instance, "I will proclaim Your
name to My brethren; I will sing Your praise in the midst
of the congregation." 13And again, He says, "I will put My
trust in Him." And once more, "Here am I and the children
God has given Me."

Jesus, Our Saviour

14 Since the children are of mortal flesh and blood, similarly He partook of the same, that through death He might
destroy the devil, who has the power of death. 15Also, that
He might set free those who, because they feared death,
lived their whole lifetime in bondage. 16He did not come to
help the angels, but rather to save the descendants of Abraham. 17Therefore He had to be made like His brethren in
every way, so that He might become a High Priest, merciful
and faithful in the service of God, making atonement for
the sins of the people. 18It is because He himself has experienced suffering and temptation that He is able to help those
who are tempted.

CHAPTER 3

Christ Better Than Moses

MY fellow-Christians, you have a share in this heavenly calling. Think carefully now of Christ Jesus. He is
the Apostle and High Priest of our faith. 2He had been
faithful to God who had appointed Him, as was Moses, too,
in all the work in God's house. 3But Jesus is entitled to far

greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has more honor than the house itself. 4Every house is built by someone, and the universe is built by God himself. 5Moses was a servant in the whole house of God, and he was certainly faithful, testifying to a message that would be spoken later. 6But Christ, too, was faithful over God's household, as faithful as a Son. And we are that household if only we keep up our courage to the end, as well as our hope, in which we rejoice.

Israel in Rebellion Under Moses

7 The Holy Spirit says, "Today, when you hear His voice, come. 8Do not harden your hearts as your fathers did in the wilderness when they angered Me and put Me to the test. 9For forty years they saw My reactions as they tried My patience and tested Me. 10I was therefore exasperated with that generation and said, 'Their hearts are always going astray and they have no knowledge of My ways.' 11So in My anger I took oath, saying, 'They shall never enter My rest.' "

12 Brethren, take care, therefore, lest there be some one of you who has a wicked, unbelieving heart that will lead you to turn away from the ever-living God.

Exhortation to Believe in Christ

13 Encourage one another, rather, and do it every day as long as each day is called "today," and beware lest some one of you may have his heart hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. 14For we are Christ's partners if the faith we laid hold of at the start remains unshaken to the end. 15These words still hold true, "Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion." 16Who was it who heard His voice and yet rebelled? Were they not all those who had been led out of Egypt by Moses? 17And with whom was God incensed for forty years? Was it not those who had sinned and who came to their death out there in the wilder-

ness? [18]And to whom did He swear that they should never come into His rest? Was it not to those who disobeyed Him? [19]So we see that it was on account of unbelief that they could not enter the promised land.

CHAPTER 4

The Rest of Faith

THE same promise of entering into His rest still remains open. Then let us have the proper fear lest some one of you may fail to reach it. [2]For we, too, have had the Good News announced to us, just as they had had it. The message that they heard did not profit them at all, because although they heard it, they did not believe it. [3]For, to enter the rest, one has to believe. Just as He has said, "So in My anger I took oath, saying, 'They shall never enter My rest.'" All His works had been planned before the foundation of the world.

The Rest of God

4 Elsewhere in Scripture the seventh day is mentioned in this way, "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works." [5]Yet, in the other place, He said, "They shall never enter My rest." [6]It still remains true that some will enter it. It was due to disobedience that those who formerly heard the glad tidings did not make the goal. [7]Again He sets a certain day, speaking through David after so long a time (as has been quoted), "Today, when you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts." [8]Now, if Joshua had given them that rest, then God would not later have said anything about another today. [9]At any rate, God's people have a today of sabbath rest awaiting them. [10]And anyone who attains to this rest will rest from his labors, even as God rested from His on the sabbath.

Exhortation to Enter the Rest

11 Let us then strive diligently to enter that rest, and let
no one fall behind through disobedience such as was named.
12God's Word should help. It is alive and powerful. It is
sharper than a two-edged sword; it penetrates deeply, mak-
ing a distinction between soul and spirit, as well as between
joints and marrow. It is keen in judging the thoughts and
purposes of the heart. 13No created being can escape God's
notice. Everything lies bare. Everything is exposed to the
eyes of Him to whom we must render our account.

Jesus' Sinlessness

14 Since we have a High Priest who has made His way
to that heavenly goal, even Jesus, the Son of God, let us
hold fast to our faith in Him. 15He is not a High Priest who
cannot sympathize with us in our infirmities. This, our High
Priest, is One who has been tempted like ourselves, and in
every respect, yet He never sinned. 16Come, then, let us
go up boldly to the throne of grace, and ask for forgiveness,
and get help for the days ahead.

CHAPTER 5

The Office of High Priest

EVERY high priest who is chosen from among
his fellow men becomes a servant of God. It is his business
to make offerings — gifts and sacrifices — for sins. 2Since
he himself is human and frail, he should be capable of deal-
ing tenderly with the ignorant and erring ones. 3And because
of his own sinful nature, he must necessarily offer sin-offer-
ings for himself as well as for the people he serves. 4It is
God who calls a high priest, even as He called Aaron. No
one of his own accord assumes this honor.

Christ Our High Priest

5 It was so with Christ, too. He did not claim for Himself the honor of being a High Priest. He was appointed by
Him who had said to Him, "You are My Son. This day I
have begotten You!" 6And in another place He has said,
"You are a Priest for ever, of the rank of Melchizedek!"
7During His life here on earth He offered up prayers and entreaties, loud crying and bitter tears to Him who was able
to save Him from death. Because of His reverent submission
to God, His prayer was heard. 8Though He was God's Son,
He had to learn obedience through suffering. 9And because
He had finished His task He became the source of eternal
salvation to all those who obey Him. 10And God has pronounced Him a High Priest of the order of Melchizedek.

Warning Against Apostasy

11 There is much that we could say about Him, but it is
hard to make it clear, seeing that you seem sluggish in
spiritual understanding. 12Some of you should surely be
teachers by this time, yet you still need some one to teach
you the very first principles of God's revelation. You are
like babies who have need of milk and cannot take solid
food. 13Those on a milk diet are mere children, unacquainted with the doctrine of righteousness. 14Solid food is
good for full-grown men, whose senses are habitually in
training to distinguish between what is good and what is bad.

CHAPTER 6

Christian Progress

LET us now dismiss the question of elementary Christian instruction and pass on to that of full maturity.
We need not at this time again build up the foundation doctrines such as turning away from dead formalism to faith
in God. 2Likewise, such questions as baptism, laying on of

hands, resurrection of the dead and final judgment can now be omitted. [3]But we shall take them up later, if God permits.

4 For it is impossible for those who once have been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift and have become sharers of the Holy Spirit [5]and have tasted the good Word of God and the power of the age to come, [6]if they fall away, to renew themselves to repentance, for they have crucified again the Son of God and have exposed Him publicly to shame. [7]It is so, too, with a piece of ground that has drunk in the down-pouring rain repeatedly and has yielded good crops for those who have tilled it; such land has a blessing from God. [8]But if it yields only thorns and thistles, it has no value. It is almost under a curse, and the end is to burn it all down.

The Need of Earnestness

9 Even if we give this warning, in your case, beloved, we feel certain that better things are in store, things that have to do with salvation. [10]You have been of help to the Christians, and still are. God is not so unjust that He will forget all about your work, which was nothing less than a labor of love for His name's sake. [11]We long, however, to see each one of you show earnestness to the very end, looking forward to the fulfillment of your hope. [12]So do not be sluggish. Be imitators of those who through faith and patient waiting inherit the promises.

The Need of Perseverance

13 When God made a promise to Abraham, He took an oath. He took the oath by Himself, since there was no greater name by which He could swear. [14]He said, "I will surely bless you and give you increase." [15]Then, after a long and patient waiting, Abraham attained what had been promised him. [16]It is customary when men make oaths that they swear by something greater than themselves and, when

an oath is added to confirm a statement, that puts an end to further questioning. [17]God, too, bound Himself with an oath, because He had a great desire to show to the heirs of His promise that His intention was unchangeable.

18 In His promise and oath we have, then, two assurances that cannot be revoked, for God cannot possibly tell a lie. These should, therefore, strongly encourage us, as we are seeking refuge from dangers here, to lay hold of the hope set before us. [19]This hope is like an anchor of the soul. It is sure and stable, and reaches even within the Veil. [20]Jesus, our forerunner, has already entered there in our behalf, and there He has been made a High Priest for ever in the priesthood of Melchizedek.

CHAPTER 7

Melchizedek a Type of Christ

THIS Melchizedek was once a king of Salem and a priest of the Most High God. He met Abraham as he was coming back from the defeat of the kings, and gave him his blessing. [2]Abraham gave him in return a tenth of everything he had. By translation of this name, Melchizedek is, in the first place, a king of righteousness. In the next place, he is king of Salem, which means king of peace. [3]There is no record of his father or mother. There is no genealogy, no date of birth or death. He is called "a high priest for ever," and is a symbol of the Son of God.

Melchizedek Received Tithes from Abraham

4 See how great a man he must have been, to have Abraham, the patriarch, give him a full tenth of the spoils of war. [5]Now, those of Levi's descendants who become priests have a commandment in the Law, to take tithes from the people, that is, from their brethren who like themselves are descended from Abraham. [6]But here is a man who gets

tithes from Abraham even though he is not of his ancestry, and, in addition, he blesses Abraham, who had the promises. [7]There can be no dispute about the fact that blessings come down from the superior ones to the inferior. [8]Among us here the priests who receive the tithes are mortal men. But in the case of Melchizedek, it says that he lives on! [9]It is correct to say that Levi, who received tithes, also gave tithes, through Abraham. [10]For he was yet in the loins of his ancestor Abraham when Melchizedek met him.

The Aaronic Priesthood Lacking in Perfection

11 Under the Levitical priesthood the people had received the Law. If perfection could have been reached through it, what need was there for another priest who was of the order of Melchizedek and not named after the Order of Aaron? [12]For when there is a change in the priesthood, there must necessarily also be a change in the Law. [13]The Man of whom these things are spoken belonged to a different tribe, one which has never had a priest to serve at the altar. [14]It is also certain that our Lord came from the tribe of Judah, but Moses said nothing about priests coming from that tribe. [15]This point is made still more clear by the coming of a new Priest in the likeness of Melchizedek. [16]He was not appointed because He met the legal requirements as to descent, but because He had the power of immortal life. [17]For the Psalmist testifies about him: "You are a Priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

18 By this appointment a former commandment was set aside, because it was weak and ineffective. [19]The Law can, in fact, make nothing perfect. Then, again, a better one was introduced, one that draws us near to God. [20]He was made High Priest, but not without an oath. It was not as with the others, who became priests without swearing to be faithful. [21]No, He was appointed Priest by the swearing of an oath, spoken by God himself in these words, "The Lord has sworn, and does not withdraw the oath: 'You are a Priest

forever, of the order of Melchizedek!' " [22]This makes Jesus a guarantee of a much better covenant.

Aaronic Priests Died, But Christ Lives Forever

23 In the Old Covenant there was a succession of priests, for death stopped them from staying on. [24]But Jesus will live forever, and His priesthood will never cease or change. [25]Therefore, He is also fully able to save all those who approach God through Him, for He will always live to make intercession for them.

26 We needed just such a High Priest. One who is godly, undefiled, separated from sinners, raised higher than the very heavens. [27]He is not like the ordinary high priest, who has to offer sacrifices every day, first for his own sins, then for the sins of his people. He has, indeed, offered up sacrifice for them, and that once for all in that He offered up Himself. [28]The Law kept appointing men as high priests, and men have their infirmities, but the Word of the Oath, which came later than the Law, appointed the Son, who has forever been perfect.

CHAPTER 8

Christianity Has a Better Covenant

NOW, to sum up what has been said: We have such a High Priest, and He is now seated at the right hand of the throne of the Almighty in heaven. [2]He is the Priest who ministers now in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord, not man, has set up. [3]But every high priest is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices, hence it is necessary for this High Priest to have something to offer. [4]Of course, He would not be a priest at all if He were still on earth. Here, those who are priests offer the gifts according to the Law. [5]Still their place of worship is but a type and shadow of the heavenly one, as Moses was told when

he was about to set up the tabernacle. For God said to him, "See to it that you make everything like the pattern shown you on the mountain." [6]But as to Christ, He has been given a ministry far more excellent, being also the Mediator of a far better covenant, which rests upon better promises. [7]Surely, if the first covenant had been perfect there would have been no occasion for a second one.

The New Covenant Is Everlasting

8 God found fault with them, for He said: "Listen, says the Lord, the days are coming when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. [9]It will not be like the covenant that I make with their fathers at the time when I took them out of the land of Egypt. But they did not stick to their agreement, says the Lord; therefore I, in turn, disregarded them. [10]And now, says the Lord, since those days are over, I will make this new covenant with the House of Israel: I will put my laws into their minds. I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they shall be My people. [11]And there will be no need for anyone to teach his neighbor, or even his brother, to know the Lord, because all of them, from the least to the greatest, shall already know Me. [12]They shall know that I will pardon their misdeeds and will remember their sins and iniquities no more." [13]Here He speaks of a new covenant, thus making the first one old. Whatever gets old and feeble is about ready to disappear. (*Jer.* 31:31-34)

CHAPTER 9

The New Covenant Has a Better Place of Worship

EVEN the first covenant had its forms of worship and a place of worship, a sanctuary here in this world. [2]A tent, or tabernacle, was set up, whose outer part was equipped with a candlestick, a table and the presentation

loaves of bread. This first part was called the Holy Place.
3Then behind the second curtain of the tent was a room
called the Holy of Holies. 4Here were kept a golden incense
vessel, and the ark of the covenant, overlaid on all sides
with gold, and in it was the golden jar that held the manna.
Aaron's rod that had budded and the tablets on which the
Law was written were also in the ark. 5And above it were
cherubim of glory, overshadowing the mercy seat. But this
is not the time to speak in detail of these matters.

6 These arrangements having thus been made, the priests
could at all times go into the outer tent and there conduct
their services. 7But into the inner room only the high priest
could go, and that only once a year. He must never go in
without blood, which he then offered for himself and for the
errors of his people.

8 By this, the Holy Spirit wants to show us that the way
into the Holy of Holies was not yet open to us while the
old covenant was still in force. 9And this is a symbol for
the present age as well. For we, in like manner, bring our
gifts and sacrifices, but they cannot make the conscience of
the worshiper perfect. 10The reason is that these ceremonies,
dealing with food and drink, and various washings and
regulations in regard to the body, are in force only till the
time when things should be set right.

The New Covenant Has a Better Sacrifice

11 That time came with Christ. He is the High Priest of
the good things that are to come. His was a greater and
more perfect tabernacle, not made by human hands, that is
to say, not belonging to this physical creation. 12He entered
the Holy of Holies once for all and won for us eternal re-
demption, not by the blood of goats and calves but by His
own blood. 13Now the blood of bulls and goats, and the
ashes of a heifer, when sprinkled upon defiled persons were
sufficient to make the body pure again. 14Then how much
more shall the blood of Christ, through the Eternal Spirit,

purify your conscience from dead works, to serve God! In the sight of God, Christ was a perfect sacrifice, without spot. [15]For that reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant. Thereby, those who are called may obtain the eternal inheritance promised them, for He suffered death in order to save those who had transgressed under the first covenant.

Christ's Death Indispensable

16 In the case of a will, the death of the testator has to be established. [17]For a will goes into force only after death and has no force whatever as long as the testator is alive. [18]Again, even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. [19]So after Moses had read all the commandments of the Law to all the people, He took the blood of calves and goats, together with water, then with some scarlet wool and a hyssop sprinkler he sprinkled both the book and all the people. [20]And then he said, "This is the blood of the Covenant, which God has prescribed for you." [21]In like manner He also sprinkled the tabernacle with blood, and likewise all the utensils used in divine worship. [22]I can almost say that everything, according to the Law, is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.

Christ's Death Sufficient

23 It was necessary, then, that our copies of the heavenly things should be purified by these rites. For the heavenly things themselves, there had to be better sacrifices than these. [24]For it was not a sanctuary made by human hands that Christ entered — one that was copied after the true one — but He went into heaven itself, in order to appear for us in the very presence of God. [25]And He did not have to make an offering of Himself again and again, as did the high priest who must go into the Holy of Holies year after year to offer blood not his own. [26]For if so, He would have had to suffer death repeatedly, from the time of the creation.

27 But as things stand, He has come, once for all in the
fulness of time, to atone for sin by the sacrifice of Himself.
28Men are destined once to die, and after that they are to
stand before judgment. 29And Christ came and suffered
death once, bearing the sins of many. And He will appear
a second time, not as a sin-bearer, but as the Saviour of all
those who await His appearing.

CHAPTER 10

The Old Covenant Demanded Many Sacrifices

THE Law gives only a shadow of the benefits in store for the godly, but it is not an exact image of the good things themselves. It can, therefore, never perfect those who draw near, even though the same sacrifices are offered up for them year after year continually. 2If they had given perfection, would they not have ceased to be offered? Because if the worshipers had, once for all, been cleansed, their consciences would no longer reproach them of sin. 3But as it is, in their annual sacrifices they are always reminded of their sins. 4And besides, it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats can take away sins.

The New Covenant Has Only One Sacrifice

5 For that reason when Christ came into the world He
said, "You have not wished for sacrifices and offerings, but
you have prepared a body for Me. 6No, you never cared
for burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin. 7So I said, 'See! I
have come to do your will, O God, as is written of Me in
the rolls of the Book of the Law.' " 8He had just said, "You
do not desire or take pleasure in sacrifices and offerings,
burnt-offerings and sin-offerings, all of which are offered ac-
cording to the Law." 9Then He added, "See, O God, I
have come to do Your will!" That means that He is taking
away the old (first) order of sacrifices, so as to establish a

new order in its place. [10]It is, then, His will to sanctify us through the offering made once for all, of the body of Jesus Christ.

Christ's Sacrifice Has Complete Efficacy

11 Every priest must perform his tasks daily, repeatedly offering the same sacrifices, which can never actually take away sins. [12]But He offered one sacrifice, good for ever, and then took His seat at the right hand of God. [13]Since then He has been awaiting the day when He shall have placed His enemies as a footstool for His feet. [14]Note that it was by one offering that He made perfect, for all time, those who are sanctified. [15]To this the Holy Spirit also bears witness in Holy Writ. [16]He says, "This is the covenant that I will make with them in those later days, says the Lord: I will put My laws into their hearts, and I will engrave them in their minds. [17]And I will no more remember their sins and lawless ways." [18]For where these are forgiven there is no longer any place for a sin-offering. (*Jeremiah* 31:31-34)

Christ's Return an Incentive to Fidelity

19 Since then, brethren, we can by the blood of Christ boldly enter into the Holy of Holies above. [20]He has opened for us, through the curtain, that is, through His death, a new and living way. [21]And He is now the High Priest over the house of God. [22]So let us now approach Him with a sincere heart and with unwavering faith, with our hearts cleansed from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water. [23]And we must hold fast to our confession of hope, never in doubt, because we can rely on Him who gave us His promise.

24 We should also consider one another, so as to arouse one another to love and good works. [25]And let us not neglect to attend meetings of our congregations, as some are in the habit of doing, but rather let us encourage one another. This do all the more as you can see that the Day is drawing near.

God's Judgment on Apostasy

26 Now, if we wilfully go on sinning after we have gotten
a full knowledge of the truth, there is no longer left a sacri-
fice for sins. 27There comes, then, a fear of the judgment to
come and a fiery hatred which eventually will consume those
who hate Christ. 28When a man defies the laws of Moses,
and is convicted of this by two or three witnesses, he has to die
without hope of mercy. 29How much worse is that man who
has trampled the Son of God under foot, who has valued as
worthless the blood of the covenant by which he had had
his sins forgiven, and who has insulted the Spirit of Grace!
Will not such a one be counted worthy of a punishment
even more severe? 30We know Him who has said, "Ven-
geance is Mine, I will repay." The Lord has spoken this, and
again He has said, "The Lord will judge His people." 31Yes,
it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God!

The Reward of the Faithful

32 Recall now those former days, soon after the light
first came to you, what a great struggle and suffering you
had to endure! 33Sometimes you were publicly exposed
to abuse and violence, and at other times you were sym-
pathizers with those who were being harshly treated in that
way. 34For you took pity on the prisoners (on me in my
bonds), and cheerfully accepted the plundering of your
goods, because you felt sure that you had a much better
and more lasting possession in heaven.

35 Do not, therefore, give up your courage, with its
great hope of reward. 36And you will also need endurance
if you are to carry out God's will and receive what He has
promised. 37"Only a little while now and the Coming One
will come, and that without delay. 38But it is by faith that
My righteous ones shall live. And if he shrinks back, My
soul will have no pleasure in him." 39We, however, are not
of the kind that shrink back to our destruction, but we are
of those who have faith, so that our souls may be saved.

CHAPTER 11

The Sphere of Faith

NOW, faith means that we are sure of getting the things we hope for; it means that we are certain as to things we cannot see. [2]For by it the men of old gained God's approval. [3]It is by faith that we understand that the world was created by the Word of God, so that the things that we see did not evolve out of existing matter.

Abel, Enoch, Noah

4 Faith made Abel's offering more acceptable to God than Cain's. Through it, God approved of him as being righteous, and He bore witness to this by accepting his gifts. And although Abel is dead, he still speaks to us through this.

5 Faith caused Enoch to be taken up, so that he did not experience death. He disappeared, for God had taken him. And before he was taken up, evidence was given him that God was well-pleased with him. [6]But without faith it is impossible to please God. To come to God, two things are necessary: First, to believe that He exists, and, second, that He rewards those who try to find Him. [7]Faith also led Noah, moved by reverence, to build an ark for his family, after he had been warned by God of the dangers in the offing. So, by faith, he condemned the whole world and became an heir of the justification that comes by faith.

Abraham and Sarah

8 Faith made Abraham obey when he was called to go out to a land that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing just where he was to go. [9]Faith kept him there in the promised land as a stranger, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, joint-heirs with him of the same promise. [10]What he was really looking forward to was the

city with sure foundations, whose architect and builder was God himself.

11 Faith also gave Sarah power to conceive after she was far beyond the years of child-bearing, and the reason for this was that she believed that He who had given His promise was trustworthy. 12And so there sprang from a man as good as dead as far as prospects for progeny, a race of people countless in number like the stars in the heavens and as the sands of the seashore.

13 All these died, still believing, although they had not yet received in full what had been promised. But they had glimpsed the fulfillment in the distance; they hailed it with delight and they acknowledged that they were only strangers and exiles here on earth.

14 In saying this much, they were clearly trying to say that they were seeking their true homeland. 15If they had been longing for the land from which they had gone out, they could have found opportunities for returning to it. 16The better country that they longed for was nothing less than heaven itself. On that account, God is not ashamed to be called their God, and He has prepared for them a city up there.

17 Faith made Abraham stand the test when he offered up Isaac. Yes, this man who had received the promises was nevertheless ready to offer up his only son! 18It was the son concerning whom it had been promised, "Your name will live on in the descendants of Isaac." 19But He reasoned that God could even raise from the dead and, figuratively speaking, he did receive Isaac back as from the dead.

Isaac, Jacob, Joseph

20 Faith enabled Isaac to invoke future blessings on Jacob and Esau. 21Faith caused Jacob, on his deathbed, to bless each of Joseph's sons, as he bowed in worship over the head of his staff. 22Faith induced Joseph, as he was dying, to make mention of the coming exodus of the Israelites.

and to give orders as to the removal of his bones from Egypt.

Moses

23 Faith caused the parents of Moses, at his birth, to hide him for three months because they saw that he was a handsome child and they were not afraid of the king's edict.
24When Moses reached maturity it was faith that made him refuse to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. 25He chose to share the sufferings of God's people rather than to have temporary enjoyment of sinful pleasures. 26He considered the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt, for he was looking ahead to the promised reward.

27 Faith, not fear of the king's anger, prevailed on him to leave Egypt. And he kept on as though he could see Him, the unseen King. 28Faith led him to keep the Passover and to put the blood-signs on the doorposts, so that the angel of death, who killed the first-born Egyptian sons should not touch anyone of Israel. 29In faith they crossed the Red Sea as though it were dry land, but the Egyptians who tried to do the same were swallowed up by the Sea.

Many Heroes of Faith

30 By faith the walls of Jericho collapsed, after having been encircled by marching men for seven days. 31By faith Rahab the innkeeper was not put to death with the disobedient, for she had received the spies with a welcome of peace.

32 What further examples do I need? I should not have time enough to tell about Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthah, and David, and Samuel, and the prophets.
33Through faith these men conquered kingdoms, established justice, received promises anew and stopped the mouths of lions. 34They quenched the power of fire; they escaped from death by the sword. They won strength out of weak-

ness; they became mighty warriors and put foreign armies to flight.

35 There were women whose dead came back to them by resurrection. There were others who hoped for a better resurrection and who would not therefore accept release, but preferred to be tortured to death. 36Others were mocked and whipped, or were put in chains and imprisoned. 37Some were stoned, or sawed in two. Some were tempted and then killed, slaughtered by the sword. Dressed in nothing but sheepskins and goatskins, they went about poor, oppressed and ill-treated. 38They wandered about over deserts and mountains; they hid in caves and in holes in the ground. This world was not worthy of them.

39 All these had, by their faith, obtained a good report, yet they did not receive in full what had been promised them. 40And for us God had something still better in mind, namely, they should not reach perfection without us, too.

CHAPTER 12

Jesus the Example

WE are, then, figuratively encircled by a great crowd of witnesses. Therefore, why not lay aside everything that hinders, including the sins that cling to us so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us. 2Let us look for strength to Jesus, the pioneer and perfector of our faith. To win the joy set before Him, He endured the cross and scorned its shame, and then took His seat at the right hand of God's throne.

Our Sufferings and His

3 In order that you may not grow faint and faint-hearted consider Him carefully, and the hostility that He had to bear from sinful men. 4In your fight against sin you have not as yet resisted to the point of giving your lifeblood. 5There is

a word in Scripture which speaks to you as sons: "My son,
do not think lightly of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose
courage when He reprimands you. [6]Yes, indeed, the Lord
disciplines the one He loves, and everyone whom He re-
ceives as His son must feel His rod."

Discipline the Evidence of God's Love

7 You must submit to discipline as a proof that God is
treating you as sons. Is there any earthly father who does
not at times punish his sons? [8]But if you go along without
any correction, then you are not true sons, but illegitimate.
The fact is that discipline is the common lot of all.

9 Besides this, we had respect for our natural fathers
when they saw fit to punish us. Shall we not still more
readily submit to our spiritual Father and live a better life?
[10]Indeed, they disciplined us for a short time, as it seemed
good to them, but He does it for our good in order that we
may have a share in His holiness. [11]Naturally, all discipline
seems hard to take at the time, but later it makes for peace
and uprightness of character to those who have been trained
by it.

12 Therefore, up with your hands that are now dangling
down, and make those weak knees of yours strong again!
[13]Keep your feet in the straight paths so that if one is lame
he may not be turned out of the way but rather be improved.

Christian Holiness

14 Try to be at peace with everyone. Strive to be holy,
for without holiness no one will see the Lord. [15]Take care
lest some one of you fails to respond to God's grace, or lest
any root of bitterness spring up and cause trouble and be
a poison to many. [16]Let no one be immoral or irreverent,
as Esau, who sold his birthright for one single meal. [17]You
know that afterwards he was most anxious to inherit the
blessing that had been his, but he was rejected. Though he
earnestly sought with tears, there was then no chance for
him to repent of his foolish deed.

The Contrast Between Sinai and Zion

18 You have not now come up to a mountain that could
be touched, and that burned with fire. And there is now no
gloom, or pitch-darkness, or storm. 19And, likewise, there is
no trumpet blast, and there is no voice speaking words that
made the hearers beg that they might hear no more. 20For
the voice gave an order: "Even if a wild animal should
touch the mountain, it has to be stoned." 21And Moses,
too, as he looked at the appalling sight, said, "I tremble
with fear."

22 Instead, you have come up to Mount Zion, the city
of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, where are
gathered angelic hosts by the tens of thousands. 23Here is a
festal gathering of everyone. Here is the Church of the First-
born, whose names are written in heaven. Here is God, the
Judge of all. Here are the spirits of just men made perfect.
24Also Jesus is here, and He is the Mediator of the new
covenant, in which the sprinkling of His blood announces
better things than that of Abel's.

Warnings and Instructions

25 Be careful. Do not refuse Him who now speaks. They
refused to obey the man who here on earth instructed them
in God's law, but they did not escape. Then how much less
can we escape if we refuse to hear Him who came from
heaven to teach us? 26Then His voice shook the earth. But
now we have His promise, saying, "Only once more will I
shake the earth, and, at the same time, also the heavens."
27Now the words "once more" point to the fact that the
things shaken, as of the things made, will be taken away,
so that there will remain only those things that cannot be
shaken. 28Therefore, let us be grateful that we shall receive
a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and let us serve God so as
to please Him, in reverence and godly fear. 29Remember,
too, that our God is a consuming fire.

CHAPTER 13

Brotherly Love Enjoyed

CONTINUE to love one another. [2]Do not forget hospitality, because in this way some, without knowing it, have had angels as their guests. [3]Remember those in prison, as though you yourself were one of them. Remember also those who are ill-treated, since you, too, have mortal bodies.

4 Let marriage be held in honor among all and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled, for God will judge fornicators and adulterers.

5 You must not be lovers of money. You should be content with what you have, for He has said, "I will never give you up; I will never forsake you!" [6]Hence, we can boldly claim, "The Lord is my helper. I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

7 Remember your pastors, those who have spoken the Word of God to you. Consider the results of their efforts, and let your faith be like theirs. [8]Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. [9]But there are many and strange teachings abroad. Do not be led astray by them. It is a good thing that the heart is made stable by grace, and not by things to eat. Those who make foods a religious observance have not been benefited thereby.

Christian Separation and Worship

10 Ours is a spiritual altar, from which those who serve in the tabernacle have no right to eat. [11]In their worship, the high priest brought the blood of beasts into the Holy of Holies to be offered as a sacrifice for sins, but the bodies of the animals were burned outside the camp. [12]So Jesus, in order that He might purify the people by His own blood, suffered outside the gate. [13]Let us, then, go out to Him outside the camp, sharing the shame with Him. [14]For we have no permanent city here below, but we seek the City that is to come.

Christian Obedience

15 Our constant sacrifice to God should therefore be our
songs of praise, the fruitful confession of His name with our
lips. [16]And do not forget also to do good and to speak the
Good Word to others, because God is pleased with such
sacrifices. [17]Obey your pastors and submit to their will. It
is their business to keep watch over your souls, as men who
have to give account. Help them to labor with joy and not
with sorrow, which would not be to your credit.

Apostolic Benediction

18 Pray for us, for we want to be honorable in all our
conduct, and we feel sure that we have a good conscience
as to this. [19]And do this the more earnestly, I beg of you,
in order that I may the sooner be restored to you.

20 May you have peace from God, who by the blood of
the eternal covenant raised again from the dead our Lord
Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep! [21]May He make you
perfect in every good work that you may do His will, and
work in you what is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus
Christ! Glory be to Him for ever and ever! Amen!

22 Brethren, I appeal to you, be patient with my word of
exhortation, for I have written to you very briefly. [23]You
should know that Brother Timothy has been released and,
if he comes soon, I will bring him with me when I come to
see you.

24 Greet all the pastors and all the Christian lay-mem-
bers. The brethren from Italy send you their love.

25 Grace be with you all! Amen.

THE GENERAL LETTER OF JAMES

CHAPTER 1

The Purpose of Testings

FROM James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve scattered tribes, greeting!

2 My brethren, you should be very happy when trials of one sort or other come your way. [3]They test your faith, you know, so that you may endure. [4]So let the work of testing go on until your endurance is perfect in every way, lacking in nothing.

5 But if anyone of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives freely to all without begrudging anyone. Ask, then, and you will receive. [6]But remember that you must ask in faith, for there can be no doubting. Anyone who doubts is like a wave of the sea, driven and tossed to and fro by the wind. [7]Such a man cannot expect to get anything from the Lord. [8]A double-minded person is, in fact, unstable in all his ways.

9 Let the brother who is poor, and tested, be proud of the honor. [10]Let also the one who is rich, but humbled, rejoice, for he too will fade away. [11]The sun comes up and brings a scorching wind. The grass dries up from it, and the flowers wither one by one. All that lovely sight must go! Just so, a man of wealth, despite his money, will also come to nothing.

12 Blessed is the man who holds out in case of trials. When he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him!

Temptation Not From God

13 When one is tempted he should never say, "It is God who is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempts no one to do evil. [14]Rather, each one is tempted by his own evil desires by which he lets him-

self be enticed and lured. [15]Then evil desire conceives and gives birth to sin; and sin, when it has run its course, ends in death.

16 My dear brethren, let no one mislead you. [17]Listen! Every desire to give, and every good and perfect gift, comes from above. They come down from the Father of Lights, in whom there is no change, not even a shadow of variation. [18]It was at His will and by His Word of truth that He brought us into being, so that we might be a sort of first-fruits of His creatures.

19 My dear brethren, everyone should be quick to listen, but slow to speak. And you should be slow to lose your temper. [20]Anger is not the way to arrive at the justice God demands. [21]Rather, you should suppress ill-will and all wickedness within you, and in meekness accept the Word which is planted in you and which can save your souls.

The Test of Faith

22 Obey the message that you hear. If you are simply a hearer, and not a doer, you will deceive yourselves. [23]Any man who listens to the Word, but does not carry out its message is like a man who takes a look at his face in a mirror, [24]then, having seen himself, goes away and at once forgets what he is like. [25]But he who looks into God's perfect law of liberty and continues in it — being not a heedless listener who forgets the message but rather a doer of it — will be blessed as a doer.

26 If a man thinks that he is religious, he must bridle his tongue. Otherwise he is deceiving his own heart and his religion is worthless. [27]Good religion, pure and without blemish, is this: To help orphans and widows in their need, and to keep one's self unstained by the world.

CHAPTER 2

The Test of Brotherly Love

MY brethren, since you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Glory, do not show anyone partiality. [2]Thus, two men may come into your congregation. One of them wears gold rings and is well-dressed, while the other one is a poor man in shabby clothes. [3]Perhaps you pay special attention to the one in fine clothing and say to him, "Here is a fine chair, please be seated." But to the poor man you say, "Stand there," or "Sit down at my feet." [4]Is not this showing partiality, and that within your own group? And is there not some evil motive back of such discrimination?

5 Listen, my brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the things of the world and made them rich in faith and heirs to the Kingdom He has promised to those who love Him? [6]But here you have dishonored the man who was poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you and drag you to court. [7]Are not they the ones who slander the fine Christian name you bear? [8]"You shall love your neighbor as yourself," is the royal law, according to the Scripture. If you really follow this rule, you do right. [9]But if you show partiality to persons, then you commit sin and you are judged as evil-doers by the law.

10 This is the way the law works: If one keeps the whole law but breaks one commandment, he becomes guilty of breaking all of it. [11]Thus He who said, "You must not commit adultery," said also, "You must not kill." Then if you kill, but do not commit adultery, you have become a transgressor of the law. [12]In your speech and in your actions you should, therefore, be like those who are to be judged by the Gospel law of liberty. [13]For under the old law merciless judgment is meted out to the merciless offender. But in the Gospel mercy triumphs over judgment.

The Test of Good Works

14 What good is there, dear brethren, in saying that one
has faith if he does not have works also? Can that faith save
him? 15Here is a brother or a sister, for example. They lack
both the needed clothing and their daily bread. 16Suppose,
then, that one of you says to them, "Go your way, and good
luck to you! May you keep warm and get a good, square
meal!" Then suppose, too, that you do not give them these
very things they need for their body? What does such talk
amount to? 17Indeed, faith by itself, without deeds to show
for it, is dead!

18 Someone may say, "You have faith, but I have works."
Well, I will show you my faith by my works, but can you
show me your faith apart from your works? 19Oh, you be-
lieve that God is one. So far, so good. But even the devils
believe that much, and they shudder. 20You foolish man, do
you really need proof that faith without works is dead?

The Illustration of Abraham

21 Consider our father Abraham. When he offered up
his son Isaac upon the altar, was not his uprightness judged
by his acts? 22You see that faith was spurring him on to do
good works, and the works, in turn, carried his faith on to
perfection. 23Thus was the Scripture fulfilled which says,
"Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as right-
eousness, and he was called God's friend." 24This shows, as
you must understand, that man is justified by a faith that
works, and not by faith alone. 25In the same way, too, was
not Rahab the innkeeper justified by her good deeds when,
after having entertained the spies, she sent them back safely
by another way? 26As a body is dead when separated from
its spirit, so also faith apart from works is dead.

CHAPTER 3

On Controlling the Tongue

MY brethren, not many of you should become teachers, for you know that we who teach are criticized all the more severely. [2]For we all are likely to stumble. One who does not make any slip of the tongue is certainly perfect, and has control over his whole body as well. [3]When we put bits into the mouths of horses, we make them obey us and we guide their whole bodies. [4]Look at the ships, too! No matter how big they are or how strong the wind that drives them, yet by means of a very small rudder they are turned about in whatever direction the will of the pilot directs.

5 True, the tongue is only a very small member of the body, but it can boast of great things. See how a tiny flame can set a mighty forest afire! [6]The tongue is a fire; it is a world of wickedness. It can poison the whole body and can set on fire every power in man's makeup. And it is itself set on fire by hell. [7]Man can tame, and at times has tamed, every species of beast and bird, even reptiles and creatures of the sea. [8]Yet no man has as yet been able to tame the human tongue, this unrestrainable evil, full of deadly poison.

9 We praise God the Father with it, and with it we also curse men who are made in the image of God. [10]From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. It is not right, my brethren, for this to go on. [11]Does a fountain discharge both sweet and bitter water from the same opening? [12]Friends, can a fig tree produce olives, or can a grapevine yield figs? No, and a salt spring cannot give fresh water.

Human and Divine Wisdom Contrasted

13 Who among you is wise and intelligent? Is it not he who lives a good life and does his deeds in humility? That is wisdom. [14]And if you have bitter jealousy and selfish aims

in your hearts, do not be proud of it, for you would then be false to the truth. [15]Such ideas do not come down from above, for they are earthly, unspiritual, devilish. [16]So wherever you find jealousy and selfishness, there you will also find confusion and every sort of wickedness in practice. [17]The wisdom that is from above is, in the first place, holy, but is also peaceable, gentle, considerate, willing to yield, full of mercy and good deeds. It is also impartial and sincere. [18]Yes, those who sow in peace will reap a harvest of righteousness.

CHAPTER 4

Friendship With the World Rebuked

WHAT causes wars and feuds among you? Do they not come from your own sensual desires which are at war in your own selves? [2]There is something that you want but you do not have it, so you get it by killing. You covet something but cannot get it, so you fight for it, you go to war. You do not have because you do not ask. [3]Or perhaps you do ask, but you do not receive because you ask from wrong motives; you want the things for your own lustful pleasures.

4 You adulterers and adulteresses, do you not know that love of the world is enmity to God? That is, if one becomes a friend of the world he thereby becomes an enemy of God. [5]Or do you think it is mere empty talk when the Scripture says, "The Spirit that took His abode in us longs for us with holy jealousy"? [6]And He keeps on showing us mercy, more and more, as Scripture says, "God opposes the proud, but He gives grace to the humble."

7 Subject yourselves, therefore, to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. [8]Come close to God and He will come close to you. Wash your hands, O sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded ones. [9]Be sorry on account of your sins; grieve over them, weep! Let your worldly

laughter give way to mourning, and your gayety be turned to sadness. [10]Humble yourself before the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Judging Others

11 Brethren, do not slander one another. If one speaks evil of a brother, he is really judging him; in fact, he is speaking against the law and judges the law. So, by criticising the law, you are no longer a doer of the law, but its judge. [12]There is, however, but one Lawgiver and Judge. It is He who is able to save and to punish with death. But who are you, that you should pass judgment on your fellow man?

The Uncertainty of Life

13 Stop a moment, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we shall go to such a town, spend a year there in business and make a good profit." [14]What do you know about tomorrow? Nothing. What is life — your life? It is like a mist that can be seen for a little while, and then it is gone. [15]This is what you ought to say, "If the Lord is willing and we are alive, then we may do this or that . . ." [16]But as matters stand, you are proud and you boast, although all such boasting is sin. [17]The principle is this, that whoever knows what is right to do but does not do it, is guilty of sin.

CHAPTER 5

Warning to the Rich

NOW, you men of wealth, take heed! Weep and wail over the miseries that will surely come upon you! [2]Your riches have gone to ruin; your clothing has become moth-eaten. [3]Your gold and silver, too, have rusted. This rust will testify against you and will eat into your flesh like fire. Is this what you have treasured up for the last days? [4]Hear!

The wages of the workmen who have harvested your fields — wages that you have kept back by fraud — these wages cry out against you. And the outcries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of Hosts. [5]You have lived here on earth in luxury and self-gratification. You have pampered your hearts in a day full of slaughter. [6]You have condemned and put to death innocent men who did not even oppose you!

Exhortations in View of the Lord's Coming

7 Be patient, therefore, brethren, until the coming of the Lord. Learn of the farmer — see how he waits for the precious fruits of the earth, how patiently he cares for his field till the early and later rains come. [8]You must also be patient. Fortify your hearts, for the coming of the Lord draws near.

9 Do not grumble against one another, brethren, so that you may not be condemned for it. Remember, the Judge is standing at the door. [10]If you want an example of patience amidst great suffering, brethren, consider the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. [11]Just see how we esteem as blessed those who endured the test. [12]My brethren, by all means stop swearing, either by heaven or by earth, or by any other oath, but let your "yes" mean yes, and your "no" mean no, and then you will escape being judged.

Prayer Brings Healing

13 Is anyone among you suffering hardships? Let him pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing a song of praise. [14]Is anyone sick among you? Let him call in the elders of the congregation, and they should pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. [15]Prayer, offered in faith, will save a sick man. The Lord will restore him and will also forgive him the sins he may have committed.

16 You should, therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be restored.

The prayer of a righteous man can bring powerful results.
[17]Think of Elijah, a man with feelings just like ours. He once
prayed fervently that it might not rain, and it did not rain
on the earth for three years and six months! [18]After that he
prayed again to bring rain, and the skies yielded their rain
and the earth once more began to sprout.

The Value of Soul-winning

19 My brethren, if anyone of you should stray from the
truth and someone brings him back, [20]you may be sure of
this: Whoever brings a sinner back from the error of his
ways saves the man's soul from death and covers up a great
many sins.

THE FIRST LETTER OF PETER

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

FROM Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the Christian Jews who live in exile in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia Province and Bithynia. [2]In accordance with the foreknowledge of God the Father, you have been chosen by Him. You have been made holy by His Spirit. You have been destined to obey Jesus Christ and to be sprinkled with His blood. Grace and peace be to you in increasing measure!

Thanksgiving for the Hope of Salvation

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! He has given us a new birth out of His great mercy, and through the fact that Christ arose from the dead, our life is full of hope. [4]We expect to receive a heritage that will never perish, one that is forever undefiled and unfading, one that is kept safe for us in heaven. [5]And all the while, because of your faith, you are being guarded by God's power until you are ready for the salvation that is to be revealed at the end of time.

Christian Trials

6 You have therefore a good reason why you should rejoice greatly, even though it seems necessary for you at present, for a short time, to have many sorrows and trials of various sorts. [7]These have come to test your faith, and faith is more precious than gold. That, too, is perishable, yet it is tested by fire. Your tested faith, at the coming of Jesus Christ, will bring you praise, honor and glory. [8]Though you have not seen Him, yet you love Him. Though you do not see Him now, yet you believe in Him and you rejoice with a joy that is both unspeakable and exalted. [9]And the final reward of your faith will be the salvation of your souls!

The Gospel of Salvation

10 As to this salvation, the prophets of old not only told
that it was to be for you, and by grace, but they also made
careful inquiries and investigations about it. [11]They tried to
find out the time and circumstances the Spirit of Christ
within them referred to when He predicted the sufferings
Christ would have to undergo and the glories that would
come afterwards. [12]And this much was disclosed to them,
that the things they were doing did not concern them but us.
These are the very things that have now been told you by
those who preach the Gospel. The Holy Spirit, sent from
heaven, is with them and they tell about things that even
the angels would like to look into.

Exhortation to Holy Living

13 Therefore, get your minds set for action; be sober, fix
your hope fully on the grace that will come to you at the
coming of Jesus Christ. [14]Be obedient, as God's children
should be. Do not yield to the sinful cravings you had in
your former ignorance. [15]Be holy in all your conduct, even
as He who called you is holy. [16]This is exactly what Scrip-
ture teaches, for it says, "You must be holy, for I am holy."

Exhortation to Godly Fear

17 When you pray to God as your Father, be careful to
approach Him reverently, and so conduct yourselves through-
out your life here on earth, for He judges each one impar-
tially according to his deeds. [18]Your way of life, as inherited
from your fathers, was a complete failure, and you were not
ransomed from it by the payment of such perishable things
as silver and gold. [19]It was the precious blood of Christ that
saved you. He is as a Lamb without blemish and without
stain. [20]God foreknew this even before the foundation of the
world, but it is now, in these last days, that for your sakes
He has been revealed. [21]Because of Christ, you believe in
God. And since God has raised Him from the dead and has

endowed Him with glory, all your faith and hope should lay hold of God.

Exhortation to Brotherly Love

22 You have now, by obeying the truth, purified your souls so that you can really love your brethren; from now on, then, love one another. Let it be a sincere and fervent love, from the heart. [23]You have been born again, from a seed that is not human and sinful, but which is spiritual and sinless. The Word of God has done it, and His Word lives and abides forever. [24]It is true that all mortal things are like grass, and the glory of mankind is like the flowers of the grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall away. [25]Not so the Word of the Lord — it lasts forever. This Word is the Gospel that has been preached to you.

CHAPTER 2

The Food of the Christian Life

CONSEQUENTLY, here are some of the things that you must observe: Put away all malice, deceit, hypocrisy, envy and slander. [2]As newborn babies you should long for the pure spiritual milk, in order that by it you may grow up to salvation. [3]For surely you have tasted the goodness of the Lord.

The Foundation of the Christian Life

4 Come to Him, then. He is the living Stone whom men rejected, whereas in God's estimation it was choice and precious. [5]You yourselves should be living stones, to be made into a spiritual house. You must be a holy priesthood that will offer up spiritual sacrifices that God will accept in the name of Jesus Christ.

6 There is a Scripture passage which says, "See! I am laying in Zion a Stone, a Cornerstone, one that is choice and

precious, and he who believes in Him will not be put to shame in any way." 7He is, therefore, precious to you who believe, but to those who refuse to believe, "the Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone!" 8Again, it is written that it has become "a stone to make men stumble, a rock to make them fall." Because they will not obey God's Word they stumble over it, and that is their destined end.

Christian Witnessing and Holy Living

9 You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation; you are God's very own people. It is up to you, then, to witness — to proclaim the virtues of Him who has called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. 10There was a time when you were not a people at all, but now you are the people of God. Then you had no mercy shown you, but now you have received mercy.

11 Beloved, I beg of you as strangers and exiles here to abstain from the sensual cravings that wage war against the soul. 12Let your behavior among the Gentiles be above reproach. And so, because they have seen your good deeds, they will glorify God on the day of judgment, even though they may now speak of you as wrongdoers.

Obedience to Authority

13 For the sake of the Lord, obey every authority that man has set up. There is, for example, the emperor, whose authority is supreme. 14Then there are the governors appointed by him to punish those who do evil and praise those who do good. 15This is in harmony with God's will, and so by doing right you can put to silence the foolish talk of the ignorant. 16Act as free men, but do not use your freedom as a cloak to cover up some wickedness. Remember to live as God's servants. 17Show respect to everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the emperor.

Master-Servant Relationship

18 You servants should serve your masters willingly and

respectfully. This you should do not only if you have good and kind masters, but even if they are of cruel disposition. [19]For in the sight of God it is a credit to a man to bear his sorrows and to suffer unjustly for the sake of conscience. [20]But what credit is there if, when you have sinned and are punished for the offense, you take the punishment patiently? It is when you do right but have to suffer for it, and yet you take it patiently — it is then that you have God's approval.

21 For this is work that you have been called to do. In this way Christ, too, suffered for you and left you an example, that you should follow in His steps. [22]He never sinned. Deceit was never found coming from His mouth. [23]He was reviled but did not retort in kind. He suffered but did not threaten vengeance. Rather, He turned the matter over to Him who judges justly. [24]On the cross He himself bore our sins in His own body, so that we might become dead to sin and live for righteousness. It is by His stripes, then, that you have been healed. [25]For you had gone astray like sheep, but now have come back to Him who is the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

CHAPTER 3

Husband-Wife Relationship

IN the same spirit, you wives should obey your husbands. Thereby some husbands who have refused to believe the Word may yet be won over without a word, simply by the conduct of their wives. [2]For they will see how pure and god-fearing you are. [3]Your beauty must not be of the outward sort which depends on such things as the braiding of the hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. [4]Your beauty should, rather, be from within — it should be the inner loveliness of the heart, the imperishable jewel of a gentle and quiet spirit, something very precious in God's sight.

5 It was in this way that the holy women in days of old
sought to make themselves attractive. They set their hopes
on God and were submissive to their husbands. 6Sarah did
that; she obeyed Abraham and called him her master. And
you women are now her true daughters if you do good and
let nothing upset you.

7 You husbands, likewise, should live with your wives in
wise consideration of them. Show the woman due honor as
the weaker sex, and as your joint-heir of the grace of life,
in order that your prayers may not be denied.

Duties of All Christians

8 To sum up, you must live together in harmony, have
sympathy and love for the fellow Christians. Be tender-
hearted and friendly. 9Do not return evil for evil, nor pay
back abuse with more abuse. On the contrary, you should
give people your blessing, for it is to this task that you have
been called, and it is in this way that you yourselves can
obtain a blessing. 10For the Scripture says, "If a man would
enjoy life and see happier days, then he should keep his
tongue from speaking evil and his lips from uttering deceit.
11Let him turn away from sin and do right; let him seek
peace and go after it. 12For the Lord's eyes rest on the
righteous and His ears listen to their prayers. But the Lord's
face is set against those who do wickedness" (*Psalm* 34:12-
16).

Christ Consecrated in the Heart

13 Really, who is likely to harm you if you are eager to
do what is right? 14But even if you should suffer for doing
what is right, that, too, is a blessing. Do not be afraid of
your foes; do not be worried. 15In your hearts give reverence
to Christ as Lord. If anyone asks you to give a reason for
the hope within you, be ready at all times to give an answer,
yet doing it in a humble and reverent manner. 16See to it
that you have a good conscience. And may those who do

attack your Christian conduct be put to shame when they slanderously call you rascals! [17]For if it is God's will that you should have to suffer such abuse, it is better to suffer for doing right than for doing wrong.

Christ's Example of Suffering

18 Truly Christ has suffered death for sins once for all,
the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God. That
is, He was put to death in His body but He was made alive
again in His spirit. [19]It was in His spirit that He went and
preached to the spirits in prison. [20]These had at some time
been disobedient. Thus in the days of Noah God was very
patient with them, as during the building of the ark. By
means of it a few, that is, eight souls, were saved from the
flood. [21]Baptism corresponds to this figure, and now saves
you, not as removal of filth from the physical body but as
a covenant with God for a good conscience, through the
resurrection of Jesus Christ. [22]He is now in heaven at the
right hand of God, and all angels, authorities and powers
are subject to Him.

CHAPTER 4

Having the Mind of Christ

CHRIST suffered for us in His body. You, too,
therefore, should arm yourselves with the same attitude,
namely, that one who has suffered physically abandons sin.
[2]The rest of his life he should no longer spend in satisfying
human appetites, but in doing God's will. [3]In the past you
gave enough of your life to living like the heathen. You in-
dulged in sensuality, lust, drunkenness, carousing, dissipa-
tion and shameful idolatry. [4]Since you do not now indulge
in the same wild orgies, they think it very strange and speak
evil of you. [5]But they will have to answer for that to Him
who stands ready to judge the living and the dead. [6]For this
purpose was the Gospel preached to those who are now

dead, that, though they had been judged like men when in the body, they might now live on with God spiritually.

Loving One Another

7 The end of all things is drawing near. Be sober, therefore; watch and pray. 8Above all, keep on loving one another, for love makes up for a great many faults. 9Be hospitable to one another, without complaint. 10Whatever gift you may have received, make use of it for the benefit of others, like good stewards of God's many mercies. 11So if one can speak, let his words contain some message from God. And if he does some service, let it be done in the strength that God supplies. In this way God may be glorified in everything, through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory and power, forever and ever! Amen.

Exhortation to Endure Persecution

12 You are now being tested by a fiery trial of persecution. Do not be surprised at this. It is not something unusual that is happening to you. 13Rejoice, therefore, that you in some measure share the sufferings of Christ, and may you rejoice even more when His glory is to be revealed! 14If you are reproached because of Christ's name, that is a blessing, for it means that God's glorious Spirit is resting on you. On their part He is spoken of as evil, but on your part He is glorified.

15 Surely none of you should have to be punished as a murderer, or a thief, or an evildoer, or a troublemaker. 16But if one is punished for being a Christian, let him not be ashamed of that, but let him give honor to God in His name. 17The time has come for God's judgment to begin and the place is in His own household. But if it comes to us first, what will be the end of those who will not accept God's Good News? 18For, "if it is hard for the righteous man to be saved, what will then happen to those who are ungodly and sinful?"

19 Let those, then, who suffer in accordance with His
will, continue to do what is right and commit their souls
into the hands of Him who is their Creator, and faithful.

CHAPTER 5

Various Exhortations

LET me make an appeal to those among you
who are pastors. I am a fellow pastor. I was also a witness
of Christ's sufferings, and I have a part in the glory that is
to be revealed. 2Be good shepherds, then, of the flock that
God has placed in your care. Do not work as if you were
forced to do it, but because you want to do it; and not for
the money in it, but for the love of the cause. 3Do not lord
it over your members, but be models for them to copy. 4Then
when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you will obtain the
unfading crown of glory.

5 Likewise, you who are younger must be subject to the
elders. You must all of you be humble toward one another,
for as the Scripture says, "God opposes the proud but gives
grace to the humble." 6Humble yourself, then, before the
mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you when His
time comes. 7Cast all of your cares on Him, for He cares
for you.

8 Be sober and watchful, because your enemy the devil
prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone as his
prey. 9Be firm in your faith and resist him, knowing that
your fellow Christians throughout the world are undergoing
this same kind of suffering. 10Then, after you have suffered
a little while, God himself will perfect you, establish you,
strengthen you, and settle you. He is the giver of all grace
and He has called you to share His eternal glory in Christ.
11To Him be the dominion through endless ages! Amen.

Greetings and Conclusion

12 I regard Silvanus as a faithful brother. By him I am
sending this brief letter that I have written. It is to encour-
age you and to testify as to what is the true grace of God.
Hold on to it! [13]Your sister church at Babylon, God's elect
like yourselves, sends you her greetings. Also my son Mark
wants to be remembered. [14]Greet one another with a kiss
of love. Peace be to all of you who are in Christ!

THE SECOND LETTER OF PETER

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

FROM Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of
Jesus Christ. To those who, through the righteousness of our
God and Saviour Jesus Christ, have obtained a faith as
precious as what we have. [2]Grace be to you, and an ever-
increasing peace, through the knowledge of our God and
the Saviour, Jesus Christ!

The Great Christian Virtues

3 His divine power has given us everything we need for
our physical and spiritual life. This has come to us through
our getting to know Him who has called us to share His
glory and virtue. [4]And He has given us some very great and
precious promises. Through these you may have a part in
the divine nature, and you may escape the corruption which
is in the world due to lust.

5 For this very reason, then, you must do your utmost to
add virtue to your faith, and knowledge to your virtue.
[6]Next, supplement your knowledge with self-control, and
your self-control with steadfastness, and your steadfastness
with piety. [7]Then you should add brotherly kindness to
piety, and Christian love to brotherliness. [8]If you possess
such virtues and you let them develop within you, they will
not let you remain inactive and unfruitful in the cause of
our Lord Jesus Christ. [9]On the other hand, if one lacks these
qualities he is blind or shortsighted, and he forgets that he
had once been cleansed from his former sinful ways.

10 Brethren, you need therefore to be more diligent and
eager to make your call and election sure. If you do this,
you need never stumble at any time. [11]You will thus be
richly supplied with opportunities to enter the eternal king-
dom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

12 All this you know, I suppose, and are established in

the truth as far as you know it. Still, I want to remind you of these matters again and again. [13]I consider, too, that this is the right thing to do, and so as long as I am in this body of mine, I shall keep on reminding you so as to keep you awake and astir. [14]I know that I shall soon have to leave this body, and this is something that the Lord Jesus Christ himself has made known to me. [15]I shall try to provide a way so that you will be able, after my departure, to remember these things always.

Exaltation of the Scriptures

16 Surely, we did not follow cleverly-invented myths when we told you about the power of Jesus Christ and His coming. Not at all, for we had been eyewitnesses of His majesty. [17]He received honor and glory from God the Father when a voice was borne down to Him from the highest glory, saying, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." [18]We also heard this voice coming down from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.

19 Moreover, we have the Word of prophecy, which is a still surer guide, and it is well for you to give attention to it as to a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. [20]One of the first things you must understand is that no prophecy is a matter of one's own interpretation, [21]because no prophecy originated from man's own thinking, but holy men of God spoke as the Holy Spirit moved them.

CHAPTER 2

Prophecy of Apostasy

BUT false prophets also arose among the people, even as false teachers will rise up in your midst. In secret ways they will introduce harmful heresies. They will even

deny the Master who has bought them, and thus bring upon themselves a sure destruction. [2]Many will follow them in their destructive ways, and on their account the Way of the Truth will be defamed. [3]In their greed they will use honeyed words to win you over. Their condemnation, pronounced long ago, hangs over them, and their punishment awaits them.

Examples of Apostates

4 You know that God did not spare the angels who sinned. He plunged them down into hell to be kept chained in darkness, there to await the final judgment. [5]Nor did God spare the ancient world, although He kept Noah safe, together with seven other persons, when He brought the flood to destroy a godless world. Noah was, however, a spokesman for righteousness. [6]God condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, overthrew them and reduced them to ashes, as a warning to those who wanted to be ungodly. [7]He rescued Lot, who was righteous and greatly grieved over the immoral conduct of the wicked. [8]This righteous man lived among them, and what he saw and heard of their wicked deeds day after day tormented his soul.

9 But the Lord knows how to deliver a pious man from temptation, also how to keep an ungodly man under punishment until the day of judgment, [10]especially those who indulge in the defiling lusts of the flesh and who oppose authority. In their boldness and willfulness they have no fear as to speaking evil of those in high repute. [11]Not even angels, though greater in strength and power, bring defamatory charges against them before the Lord. [12]Men such as these are irrational animals, mere creatures of instinct, created to be caught and killed. They speak evil of what they know nothing about, and they will utterly perish in their own corruption.

13 And so that is the reward they will get for their

wickedness. They take pleasure in spending the day in carousing. They are blots and blemishes. And, when they are feasting with you, they think they are fooling you, and they enjoy the deceit immensely. [14]Their eyes are full of lust and they seem never to get enough of sinning. They entice souls who are not yet established. Their hearts are greedy, trained to be so. They are children under a curse. [15]They have left the straight and narrow way and have gone far astray. They have followed the example of Balaam, the son of Beor, who liked to take a bribe for wrongdoing. [16]For this wickedness of his he was rebuked, in that a dumb ass spoke to him with a human voice and checked the prophet's madness.

The Danger in General

17 Such persons are waterless fountains. They are clouds before a driving storm. They are doomed to spend eternity in utter darkness. [18]They speak their folly in pompous oratory. They allure men by using sensual cravings and the promise of liberty as bait; they get into their power those who have newly escaped from error. [19]Yes, they promise them freedom, even when they themselves are slaves of corruption, since it is plain that whatever influence controls a man becomes his master.

20 Men have escaped the defilements of the world through learning to know our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. But in case they are again entangled in them and overpowered once more, then this last condition is even worse than the first. [21]Indeed, it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after having learned to know it, to turn back again from the holy commandment that was given them. [22]What happened to them was like the true saying of the proverb, "A dog will return to its own vomit, and a sow, after having been washed, will again wallow in the mire" (*Proverbs* 26:11).

CHAPTER 3

The Lord's Return Disbelieved

MY friends, this is already the second letter that I have written to you. In each of them I have tried to arouse your true self by reminding you of certain things. [2]You should keep in mind the sayings of the holy prophets in the past, and the Gospel message of the apostles as commissioned by the Lord our Saviour.

3 One of the first things that you should know is that in the last days there will come scoffers who will live according to their own evil desires. [4]They will ask, "He promised to come. When is it? Where is He? Ever since the fathers fell asleep all things have continued the same since the creation of the world." [5]They wilfully ignore the fact that God by His command created the heavens long ago, and also the earth which was formed out of water and through water. [6]Also, that the world of that early day was deluged and destroyed. [7]It is by His Word, too, that the heavens and the earth of today are being maintained, to be destroyed by fire on the day of judgment, when the ungodly shall be punished.

His Return Delayed to Give Time for Repentance

8 Beloved, there is one thing that should not be a secret to anyone of you. It is this — that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day. [9]The Lord is not slow in fulfilling His promise, as some think. He is dealing patiently with you, giving you more time, for He does not want anyone to perish, but rather that everyone should be prevailed on to repent. [10]And the Day of the Lord will come — it will come upon you like a thief in the night. The heavens will disappear in a roaring crash. The elements will melt away with fiery heat. And the earth, too, and all its works, will be consumed.

Belief in His Return Encourages Holy Living

11 Since everything is to be thus dissolved, what sort of
persons should you be in conduct and godliness? 12Should
you not look for the Day of God to come, and work for
its coming? What a day — when the heavenly bodies will
be on fire and will come to an end, and the elements of
creation will melt in the awful heat! 13But then, believing
His promise, we look for a new heaven and a new earth,
where righteousness shall dwell.

Final Exhortations

14 On this account, beloved, while you are waiting, take
care that when He comes He will find you without spot or
blemish, and at peace. 15You can be sure that the long
patience of our Lord is part of His plan to save. Our be-
loved brother, Paul, from the wisdom that God gave him,
also wrote to you about this. 16In his letter to you, as in all
his letters, he speaks of these things. There are some things
in them that are hard to understand, that is true, and there
are people lacking knowledge and steadfastness who twist
his words to their own destruction, just as they do the rest
of the Scriptures.

17 Therefore, beloved, now that you are forewarned,
beware lest you too be led astray by the false teachings of
unprincipled men, and lest you back down from your firm
stand. 18Keep growing in grace and in the knowledge about
our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Glory be to Him now
and forever! Amen.

THE FIRST LETTER OF JOHN

CHAPTER 1

Christ As the Word, the Life and the Way to Fellowship

CHRIST is the Word of Life. He was from the beginning. We have heard Him, we have seen Him with our own eyes, we have gazed upon Him intently and we have touched Him with our hands. [2]He was made to appear before us as Life. We saw it and we bear witness to it as a fact. We preach that the Life Eternal who was with the Father has come down to us. [3]All this we have seen and heard, and we are announcing the news to you so that you may have fellowship with us and share with us in the fellowship of the Father and His Son Jesus Christ. [4]This we are writing to you so as to make your joy complete.

The Christian Walk — in the Light

5 The message we heard from Him and pass on to you is this: God is Light, and there is not any darkness at all in Him. [6]Then, if we claim to have fellowship with Him while we still walk in the darkness, we are liars both in word and deed. [7]But if we walk in the light, even as He dwells in the light, then we shall have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, will cleanse us from every sin.

Cleansing Through Christ

8 We are sinners. If we should deny this, we should deceive ourselves and there would be no truth in us. [9]But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and true to His Word and He will forgive us our sins and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. [10]And if we should say that we have not sinned, we make Him to be a liar and His Word is not in us.

CHAPTER 2

Christ Our Advocate

MY dear children, the reason I write this to you
is that you may not sin. But if anyone should sin, remember
that we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the
Righteous! [2]He Himself is the atonement for our sins, and
not only for ours, but also for the sins of the whole world!

Knowing by Obeying

3 If we keep His commandments, it is a sign that we
know Him. [4]If one says, "I know Him," but does not obey
His commandments, he is a liar and there is no truth in him.
[5]But everyone who obeys His Word will truly have the love
of God find perfect expression in his heart. By this test, then,
we may know if we have fellowship with Him. [6]The one who
claims to be living in union with Him must live the same
kind of life He lived.

An Old, Yet New, Commandment

7 Brethren, it is not a new commandment that I am writ-
ing to you, but rather an old one. You had it from the be-
ginning. This old commandment is the message you have
heard. [8]Yet it is a new commandment that I am writing you
— one that is always new and always true in its reference
to Him and to you, for the darkness is passing and the True
Light is already shining. [9]Whoever claims to be in the light
but hates his brother is still in the darkness. [10]Whoever loves
his brother lives in the light, and he causes no one to
stumble. [11]But whoever hates his brother is in darkness and
lives in darkness. And besides, since darkness has blinded
his eyes he has to grope about, not knowing where he is
going.

Love Not the World

12 My children, I am writing to you because your sins
have been forgiven for His name's sake. [13]To you, fathers, I

am writing because you know Him who has always existed from eternity. And to you, young men, I write because you have conquered the wicked one. And to you, children, I write because you know the Father.

14 Let me repeat it: I have written to you, fathers, because you know Him who has always existed from the beginning. I have written to you, young men, because you are strong and God's Word is treasured in your hearts, and because you have overcome the evil one.

15 Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If one loves the world, he will not have any love for the Father. 16For everything that the world has — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the glory and glamor of life — all this is not from the Father but from the world. 17But the world and all its lusts will all pass away, whereas he who obeys God's will will live forever.

Warning of the Antichrist

18 My children, it is the final age of the world. You have been told that the Antichrist will come. A goodly number of antichrists have already come, from which we are sure that we live towards the end of time. 19These went out from us, but they were really not of us. If they had been of us, they would have remained with us. At any rate, they have left us, so it is plain that they did not belong to our group. 20But you were anointed by the Holy Spirit, and you all know the way. 21I have not written to you as if you did not know the truth, but rather because you do know it and because you know that no lie can be true.

22 Then who is a liar, if it is not the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ? The Antichrist will be like that — he will deny both the Father and the Son. 23No one who refuses to believe on the Son can know the Father, and he who believes in the Son knows the Father as well.

24 You should, therefore, be satisfied to hold on to the Gospel that you have heard from its beginning. If what you

heard from the beginning stays by you, then you can remain in fellowship with the Son and the Father. [25]And remember, the thing that He promised us was everlasting life!

The Anointing From God

26 I am telling you these things, for there are those who want to mislead you. [27]The anointing that you received from Him stays by you, and you do not need anyone now to teach you. That same anointing teaches you in everything you do. It is true. It is not a lie. Therefore, continue to live in union with Him, even as He has taught you. [28]Yes, my children, continue to live in union with Him so that when He comes we may greet Him with confidence and not shrink back in shame at His coming. [29]You know that God is righteous. Then you should also know that everyone born of Him should also do what is right.

CHAPTER 3

"Children of God"

JUST think what a love the Father has for us, that He would call us His children — and such we are! The reason why the world does not know us as such is that it does not know Him. [2]My beloved, we are God's children now, but exactly what we are to be hereafter has not yet been disclosed to us. But we do know this, that when He appears we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. [3]He is holy, and everyone who sets his hope on Him must live a holy life.

Sin Is Lawlessness

4 Everyone who commits sin is guilty of lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. [5]You know that He came into the world to take our sins away. There was no sinfulness in Him. [6]No one who keeps in union with Him will sin. If someone sins, he has either not seen Him or he has not learned to know

Him. [7]My children, let no one lead you astray; the man who does right is righteous, just as truly as He is righteous. [8]And the man who lives in sin is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. On this account the Son of God came, to undo the works of the devil.

9 No one who has become a child of God practices sinning, for the reason that God's Spirit is in him and he cannot sin because he was begotten of God. [10]By this the children of God and the children of the devil are known apart. No one who does not live uprightly and love his brother is a child of God.

Brotherly Love vs. Hatred

11 We should love one another — this is a message that you have heard from the beginning. [12]We should not be like Cain, who was a child of the Wicked One, and killed his brother. And why did he kill him? Because his own deeds were wicked, and those of his brother were righteous.

13 My brethren, do not be surprised that the world hates you. [14]We know we have changed because we love our fellowmen. We have, so to say, passed from death to life. He who does not love his brother remains in death. [15]When a man hates his brother he is really a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life within him.

The Results of Love

16 Christ laid down His life for us. Through this act of His we know what love is and can do. And we, too, ought to lay down our lives for our brethren. [17]Suppose that a man has enough of this world's goods to live from, and that he sees his brother in need, yet he closes his heart against him. How can we say that he has God's love in him?

18 My children, let us not parade our love in word or speech only, but let us show it in deed and in truth. [19]This proves to us that we are on the side of truth and we can

satisfy our consciences before Him. [20]For if our conscience condemns us, God is greater than our conscience and He knows everything about us. [21]So, my beloved, if our conscience does not condemn us we can approach Him in confidence and without fear.

22 Whatever we ask for, we receive from Him when we keep His commandments and do the things that please Him. [23]And this is what He has commanded: That we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and that we should love one another, even as Jesus told us. [24]Whoever keeps His commandments has fellowship with Him. And then we may know that He abides in us through His Spirit which He has given us.

CHAPTER 4

Spirits Must Be Tested

BELOVED do not believe every spirit (everyone who claims to be inspired), but test them to find out if their message is from God. For there are many false prophets in the world. [2]You can tell if these spirits are from God in this way: If a spirit confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, that spirit is from God. [3]But every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not of God. This teaching is inspired by the Antichrist. You have heard that this teaching was coming, and the fact is that it is already here.

4 You are of God and you have refuted these false teachers, for He who is in you is mightier than he who is in the world. [5]Those teachers who are of the world speak about the things of the world, and the world likes to listen to them. [6]We, on the other hand, are God's people. Anyone who knows God will listen to us, whereas anyone who is not a child of God will turn a deaf ear to us. Here we have illustrated both the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

Love of God Causes Brotherly Love

7 Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from
God. And everyone who loves is a child of God and knows
God. 8One who does not love does not know God, for God
is love. 9God has shown His love to us especially in this,
that He sent His only-begotten Son into the world so that
we might have life through Him. 10Love, in this case, is not
that we loved God but that God loved us and sent His Son
to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. 11Beloved, if God has
loved us that much, ought not we also to love one another?
12No man has at any time seen God, but God makes His
abode in us if we love one another, and His love is perfected
in us.

Love of God Develops Faith in Christ

13 God has given us His Spirit. This is a proof to us of
fellowship — that we abide in Him and He abides in us.
14Besides, we have seen that the Father sent His Son to be
the Saviour of the world, and we testify to that fact. 15If
anyone will acknowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, God
will abide in him and he will abide in God. 16So, this we
know, that God has love for us, and this we truly believe.
One who lives in love lives in God, and God lives in him.

Love of God Overcomes Fear and Hate

17 A proof that love has been perfected in us is that we
meet the day of judgment with boldness, so that we are like
Him while we are yet in this world. 18Love knows no fear.
Perfect love drives out fear. Fear suggests painful punish-
ment, and the presence of fear means that one's love has
not yet reached perfection. 19Yes, we do love Him, for He
loved us first. 20A man is a liar if he says, "I love God," but
keeps on hating his brother. For how can one love God,
whom he has not seen, when he does not love his brother
whom he has seen? 21Therefore we have this commandment
from Him, that he who loves God should also love his
brother.

CHAPTER 5

Faith the Root of Fellowship

EVERYONE who believes that Jesus is the Christ is a child of God, and everyone who loves the Father will also love His child. [2]We can tell whether or not we are the children of God by noting if we love God and obey His commandments. [3]For to love God means to keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. [4]Because whatever is born of God overcomes the world. Our faith, therefore, is the victor. It has overcome the world! [5]Who is it who overcomes the world if not he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

6 This is He who came by water and blood — Jesus Christ. He did not come with water only, but with both water and blood. The Spirit is the witness to this, for the Spirit is the Truth. [7]For there are three who bear record in heaven — the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these three are One. [8]And there are three who bear witness on earth — the Spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree.

9 If we accept the testimony of men, the testimony of God is weightier. And it is about His Son that God has given testimony. [10]Besides, he who believes in the Son of God has this divine witness in himself, too. And he who does not believe God has made Him a liar by not accepting the testimony that God gave about His Son. [11]That testimony is that God gave eternal life to us, and that this life is in His Son. [12]He who has the Son has this life; he who does not have the Son does not have it.

Purpose of This Letter

13 I have written you this to say to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you have eternal life awaiting you. [14]Also that we can be bold in prayer, feeling sure

that He will hear us if we ask for anything according to His will. [15]Then, if we are sure that He hears us in anything we ask, we can rest assured that He will give us what we have asked for.

16 Again, if anyone should see a brother committing a sin that can be forgiven, he should make intercession for him, and God will give him life, providing the sin is not a mortal one. There is a mortal sin, punishable by death. I do not urge you to make intercession for that. [17]Every sort of wrongdoing is sin, but not every sin is a mortal sin that cannot be forgiven.

The Importance of Godly Living

18 Finally, we know that anyone born of God will not practice sin. For the Son of God will guard him so the wicked one may not touch him. [19]We are certain of this, too, that, while we belong to God, the whole world as such is in the hands of the wicked one. [20]One thing more is clear, namely, that the Son of God has come to us and that He has given us understanding to know Him who is the Truth, and we are in fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ, who is the Truth. He is the True God and Eternal Life! [21]My children, beware of false gods!

THE SECOND LETTER OF JOHN

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

FROM the pastor, to the elect lady of her children, my friends in the truth, loved by me and also by those who know the friends in the truth. [2]It is on account of that truth that I write. May it have a place in our hearts and remain with us forever! [3]Grace be with us, and mercy and peace from God the Father and from Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love! [4]It has made me very happy to find that some of your children are walking the way of truth, even as we received command from the Father to do.

Exhortation to Love and Obedience

5 And now, dear lady, I have a request to make of you. It should not be thought of as a new commandment that I am writing for you. Rather, it is a rule that we have had from the beginning. It is this: We must love one another. [6]What is it to love? Love is simply this, that we do as He bids us. So this commandment — one that you have had from the beginning — is one that you must follow in your Christian walk.

Warning Against False Teachers

7 Many false teachers have gone out into the world, especially those who do not acknowledge that Jesus Christ came in human flesh. Such a teacher is a deceiver and an antichrist. [8]Look to yourselves so that you do not lose out on everything that we have done. May you receive your full reward!

9 Anyone who sins and does not hold fast to Christ's teachings does not have hold of God. But if he continues in that doctrine, then he has both the Father and the Son. [10]If someone comes to you but does not have this doctrine, do not receive him into your house and do not give him a

friendly welcome. [11]Anyone who gives him a friendly greeting has then a part in his wicked works.

Conclusion

12 I have many things to say to you, but I do not intend to write it all down now with paper and ink. You see that I hope to come to you and to talk things over face to face, so that our joy may be perfect. [13]The children of your elect sister send you their best wishes. Amen!

Personal Greetings

FROM the pastor, to the beloved Gaius, whom
I truly love. 2My beloved friend, I hope that all is well with
you in every way, and that you may enjoy good health even
as your soul is prospering. 3It made me very happy when
some of the brethren came and spoke so highly of your
sincerity as you follow the truth in your daily walk. 4I can
have no greater joy than hearing that my children are walk-
ing in the truth.

Exhortation to Love and Obedience

5 You are doing a loyal thing, my friend, when you help
the brethren in any way, and not least when this service is
to strangers. 6They have told the church about your kind-
ness. And you will do well, too, in sending them forward
on their journey in a manner worthy of God. 7They set out
for the sake of His name, and they accepted nothing from
the heathen. 8So it is our duty to welcome such men, to
show that we are fellow workers in the cause of truth.

The Wrong Attitude of Diotrephes

9 I wrote the church about this, but Diotrephes, who is
eager to be a leader, refuses to acknowledge my authority.
10So if I come, I will bring up the things that he is doing,
and the malicious words that he is using against me. He is
not content that he refuses to welcome the brethren, but he
forbids others to do so, expels them from the assembly. 11My
beloved, when you imitate what another does, then choose
the right pattern, not the wrong one. He who does right is
a child of God, but he who does wrong has not seen God.

Conclusion

12 Everyone speaks well of Demetrius, even the truth
itself approves of him. I, too, commend him, and you know

that what I say is true. [13]I have much to write to you about,
but I would rather not write with pen and ink. [14]But I hope
to come to you very soon, and then we shall talk face to
face. [15]Peace be to you! The friends here greet you. Greet
the friends there, everyone by name.

THE GENERAL LETTER OF JUDE

Introduction

FROM Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ and a brother of James. To those who have been consecrated by God the Father, kept in the faith of Jesus Christ, and called. [2]Mercy and peace be to you, and love be multiplied!

Reason for Writing

3 Beloved, I have been striving hard to write to you about salvation, which is our common concern, but I find it necessary, rather, to exhort you to fight earnestly for the faith that was once for all handed down to God's people. [4]For certain men have secretly crept into the church unawares. They are godless people who pervert the grace of our God, giving us an excuse to live in uncontrolled immorality. And they deny our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Master and Lord. We have warned you against them before.

Historical Instances of Apostasy

5 I want to remind you of something that you know about already, how the Lord, after having saved His people out of the land of Egypt, went on to destroy those who did not believe. [6]Those angels, too, who did not stay in their appointed place but left their own home, He has since kept in perpetual chains and in darkness awaiting the great day of judgment. [7]Also set up as a warning are Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities near them, which had given themselves up to fornication and homosexuality, and therefore suffered the punishment of eternal fire.

Apostate Teachers Described

8 In like manner these dreamers today defile the body, set aside authority and speak evil of the glories above. [9]Now Michael the archangel did not venture to charge the devil with blasphemy when he disputed and argued with

him about Moses' body. He merely said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" [10]But these people speak evil of everything they do not understand and, like animals without reason, they follow what they understand by instinct, making themselves more and more depraved.

11 Woe to them, because they have followed the way of Cain! They rush into Balaam's error for a reward. And, like Korah, they come to destruction by revolting against God. [12]These are like hidden rocks, breaking up your brotherhood feasts. They eat with you boldly, looking out for themselves. They are rainless clouds, driven forward by the winds. They are trees of autumn, but without fruit. They are, in fact, twice dead, being without roots. [13]They are wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame. They are wandering stars, destined to remain in everlasting darkest gloom.

14 Also Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied about them when he said, "See! The Lord comes with tens of thousands of His saints. [15]He comes to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of their sinful deeds which they have done in their godlessness, and of all the harsh words that such ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." [16]These are those who grumble and complain against His ways while they follow their own lusts. They are loud-mouthed in their boastings, and flatter people for the sake of gain.

The Believer's Duty

17 Beloved it is your duty to remember the words spoken by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. [18]They told you that in the last days there would be scoffers who would be guided by their own sinful desires. [19]They are men who will create factions, worldly-minded men who do not have the Holy Spirit.

[20]But you, my beloved, must build up yourselves on the foundation of your most holy faith, and you must pray in the Holy Spirit. [21]Keep yourselves in the love of God, and

wait for eternal life through the mercy of our Lord Jesus
Christ. [22]Convince those who are in doubt. [23]Save others by
snatching them out of the fire. To others show mercy, but
use fear, showing that you hate even the very clothing be-
fouled by their lusts.

Conclusion

24 There is One who can keep you from stumbling and
who can give you a place in His glory, free from fault and
in triumphant joy. [25]He is the only wise God, our Saviour,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. To Him be glory and
majesty, power and authority, now and forever! Amen.

THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

THIS is the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to Him to show to His servants what must soon take place. He sent it by His angel and made it known to His servant John. 2He in turn testifies to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ, telling both what he heard and what he saw. 3Blessed is the one who reads this, and blessed are those who hear the words of this prophecy and who take heed to do the things that are written there, for the time is near.

Doxology and Praise

4 From John, to the seven churches in Asia. Grace and peace be to you from Him who is and was and is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before His throne! 5Also from Jesus Christ, the faithful Witness, the First-born of the dead and the Ruler of the kings of the earth. He has loved us and washed away our sins by His blood. 6He has made us to be a kingdom, to be priests before His God and Father. To Him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen.

Theme of the Message

7 See! He comes with the clouds! Every eye shall see Him, also those who pierced Him, and all the tribes of the earth shall wail on account of Him. So it is to be. Amen!
8"I am the First and the Last (Alpha and Omega)," says the Lord God, who is and was and is to come — "I am the Almighty!"

The Vision of Christ

9 I, John, am your brother and companion in suffering and in the kingdom and in patient endurance in Jesus Christ. I was on the island called Patmos because of my preaching

God's Word and witnessing about Jesus Christ. [10]On the Lord's day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet. [11]It said, "I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last; write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches — to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea."

12 I turned then to see whose voice it was that spoke to me, and as I turned I saw seven golden candlesticks. [13]And in the midst of the seven candlesticks I saw One like the Son of Man. He wore a long robe that reached to His feet and He had a gold band around His chest. [14]Both His head and His hair were white like wool, as white as snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire. [15]His feet were like polished brass, glowing as if in a furnace. And His voice was as the sound of many waters. [16]He held seven stars in His right hand and from His mouth came forth a sharp two-edged sword. His face shone like the sun at its full strength.

17 And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as if dead. But He put His right hand on me and said to me, "Don't be afraid. I am the First and the Last. [18]I am the Living One. I died, but see! I am alive again for evermore. And I have the keys of death and hell. [19]So write down now what you see, both what is and what is to happen hereafter.

20 "The secret of the seven stars that you see on My right hand, and of the seven golden candlesticks, is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches.

CHAPTER 2

Message to the Church at Ephesus

"To the angel of the Church at Ephesus write: 'These things He says who has the seven stars in His right hand, and who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks: [2]"I know about your deeds, your labor and

your endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, and that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and that you have discovered them to be liars. 3I know, too, that you are patient and have endured much for My name's sake, and that you have not grown weary. 4But I have this against you, that you have forsaken your first love. 5Remember, therefore, what you have fallen away from, and repent! And work as you did at first. Otherwise, if you will not repent, I will come to you quickly and I will take your candlestick from its place. 6Still, you have this, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans which I, too, hate. 7Now, let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will grant to eat of the fruit of the tree of Life which stands in the paradise of God." '

Message to the Church at Smyrna

8 "And to the angel of the Church at Smyrna write: 'Thus says He who is the First and the Last, who died but came to life: 9"I know about your deeds, your afflictions and your poverty; nonetheless, you are truly rich. I know also about the slander of those who claim to be Jews but are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. 10Have no fear at all of the things that you are about to suffer. The devil is about to throw some of you into prison to be tested there. And for ten days you will be in suffering there. But be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life! 11Let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death!" '

Message to the Church at Pergamum

12 "To the angel of the Church in Pergamum write: 'Thus speaks He who has the sharp two-edged sword: 13"I know what you have done and where you live, even where Satan has his throne! Yet you have been true to My name, and you did not renounce your faith in Me even in the days

of Antipas, My faithful witness, who was killed among you where Satan dwells. 14Still, I have some few things against you, too: You have some there who accept the teaching of Balaam, the man who taught Balak to ensnare the children of Israel to eat meat that had been sacrificed to idols, and to commit whoredom. 15Besides, you have among you some who hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16So you must repent! If you do not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of My mouth! 17So let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give to him a white stone, and on the stone there will be a new name written which no one knows except the one who receives it." '

Message to the Church at Thyatira

18 "To the angel of the Church in Thyatira write: 'The Son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire and whose feet are like polished brass, speaks as follows: 19"I know your deeds, your love and faith, your helpfulness and patience. I know that you are now doing even more than you did at first. 20But I have this against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel. She calls herself a prophetess and is permitted to teach and to mislead My servants to commit adultery and to eat food sacrificed to idols. 21I have given her time in which to repent of her impurity, but she has not repented. 22See! I will put her on a sickbed and I will put those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation unless they repent of their misdeeds. 23And I will put her children to death. And all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the secret thoughts and hearts of men and that I will give to each of you according to your deeds. 24But I say to the rest of you in Thyatira — to as many of you as do not have this teaching and do not know the deep teachings of Satan — to you I say that I will not impose on you any further burden. 25Only this — hold fast to what

you have until I come! [26]To him who wins the victory and who does My bidding to the end, I will give authority to rule over the heathen—the same authority that I Myself have received from My Father. [27]He will rule them with a rod of iron, and they will be broken in pieces like vessels of pottery. [28]And I will give him the Morning Star. [29]Now, let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches." '

CHAPTER 3

Message to the Church at Sardis

"AND to the angel of the Church in Sardis write: 'He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars says: "I know about your works, that you seem to be living but you are dead. [2]Be on the watch. Strengthen those who are still alive, but on the point of death. For I have not found your works perfect in the sight of My God. [3]Be mindful, then, of what you have received and heard. Follow that and repent! But if you will not be watchful, I shall come upon you like a thief and you will in no way know at what hour I will come upon you. [4]Also in Sardis you have the names of a few people who have kept their robes clean. They are worthy and therefore shall walk with Me in white. [5]Yes, he who overcomes will be clad thus in white robes. I will in no wise blot out his name from the Book of Life, but I will acknowledge his name before My Father and His angels. [6]He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches!" '

Message to the Church at Philadelphia

7 "And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: 'Thus says the Holy One, the True One, He who has the key of David, who opens the door and no one can shut it, who shuts it and no one will open it again: [8]"I know your

works. See! I have set before you an open door, and no one is able to shut it. I know how weak you are, and yet you have been true to My Word and you have not denied My name. 9Listen! There are some belonging to the synagogue of Satan who declare themselves to be Jews but are not, for they lie. See! I will make them come and bow down at your feet so that they may know that I have loved you. 10Because you have kept my Word as to patience, I will keep you safe in the hour of trial which will soon come upon the whole world for the testing of all the inhabitants of the earth. 11I will come soon. Hold on to what you have. Let no one rob you of your crown! 12I will make him who conquers a pillar in the temple of My God, never to leave it again. And I will write the name of My God on him, and the name of the city of My God — the New Jerusalem that will come down out of heaven from My God, and also My own new name. 13Let everyone who can hear, give heed to what the Spirit says to the churches!" '

Message to the Church at Laodicea

14 "And to the angel of the Church in Laodicea write: 'Thus speaks the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Origin of God's creation. 15"I know your works and find that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either the one or the other! 16Therefore, since you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I am about to spew you out of My mouth. 17"I am rich,' you say; 'I have made money and there is nothing that I need.' Alas, you do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. 18My counsel to you, therefore, is to come to Me and buy from Me gold tested by fire so that you may be rich, and get white garments to clothe you so as to cover up the shame of your nakedness, and to get eye-salve to anoint your eyes. 19I rebuke and chastise those whom I love. Be fervent, then, and repent! 20See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and

dine with him, and he with Me! [21]I will grant to the victor to sit with Me on My throne, even as I became the Victor and sat down with My Father on His throne! [22]Let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit says to the churches!" ' "

CHAPTER 4

The Throne in Heaven

AFTER this, in a vision, I saw an open door to heaven. And I heard the first voice that had spoken to me before, loud as a trumpet. It said, "Come up here and I will show you what must come to pass after this."

2 At once I was in the Spirit, and I saw a throne in heaven, and One seated on the throne. [3]And He who sat on the throne had the appearance of a jasper stone, or a sardius, and there was a halo around the throne similar in appearance to an emerald.

The Enthroned Elders

4 Round the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and I saw twenty-four elders seated on these thrones. They were dressed in white robes and had golden crowns on their heads. [5]Flashes of lightning issued from the throne, as well as peals of thunder and the sound of voices. Before the throne stood seven torches of fire which are the seven Spirits of God.

The Living Creatures

6 And before the throne there was also a sea that looked like crystal glass. And there were four living creatures before the throne and around the throne. They were covered with eyes before and behind. [7]The first living creature was like a lion, the second was like a calf, the third had the face of a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. [8]And each of the four living creatures has six wings, and these are

covered with eyes both on top and underneath. And day and night they never cease to sing, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!"

The Song of Praise

9 These living creatures then offer glory and honor and thanksgiving to Him who sits on the throne and who lives forever and ever. 10The twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and they worship Him who lives forever and ever, and they cast their crowns down before the throne and say, 11"Our Lord and our God, You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power, for You have created all things. They were created and exist only by Your will."

CHAPTER 5

The Seven-Sealed Book

ON the right hand of Him who was seated on the throne I saw a book with writing inside and on the back of it. It was sealed with seven seals. 2Then I saw an angel of mighty strength who asked with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to break its seals?" 3But there was no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth who could open the book or look into it. 4Since no one was found worthy to open the book, or to read it or to look into it, I wept bitterly.

The Adoration of the Lion of Judah

5 "Do not weep," said one of the elders to me. "See, here is One who has conquered and can open the book and break its seven seals. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah; He is the Root of David."

6 Then, right between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders, I saw a Lamb standing. It ap-

peared to have been slain. It had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God which have been sent into all the earth. 7He went and took the book out of the right hand of the occupant on the throne. 8When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each of them having a harp and golden bowls full of perfume, which are the prayers of the Christians.

9 And they sang a new song, saying, "You are worthy to take the book and to open its seals. For You were slain, and by Your blood You bought us and gave us to God, people from every tribe and language and people and nation. 10And You have made them a kingdom of priests to serve God, and they shall reign over the earth."

The Angels and the Multitude Worship

11 Then as I looked I heard the voices of many angels surrounding the throne and also the sound of the living creatures and the elders, and their number was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands. 12They cried with a loud voice, "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory and blessing!" 13And I heard the voice of every creature in heaven and on earth, and under the earth and in the sea, and all that they contain, saying, "To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing, honor, glory and power forever and ever!" 14Then the four living creatures said, "Amen!" And the elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.

CHAPTER 6

The First Seal: The White Horse (Conqueror)

I WAS looking when the Lamb opened the first of the seven seals, and the voice of one of the four living creatures came to my ears like a voice of thunder saying,

"Come and see!" [2]And as I looked I saw a white horse, and the man seated on it had a bow. And a crown was given to him and he set out as a conqueror, to win victories.

The Second Seal: The Red Horse (War)

3 And when He had broken the second seal I heard the voice of the second living creature say, "Come and see!" [4]And a second horse came forth. It was red. Its rider had been given power to take peace from the earth and to permit men to kill one another. And a great sword was given to him.

The Third Seal: The Black Horse (Famine)

5 Then when He opened the third seal I heard the third living creature say, "Come and see!" So when I looked I saw a black horse, and its rider had a pair of scales in his hand. [6]And I heard a voice seeming to come from among the four living creatures saying, "A quart of wheat for a penny. And three quarts of barley for a penny. But you must not spoil the oil and the wine!"

The Fourth Seal: The Pale Horse (Pestilence)

7 When He broke the fourth seal I heard the voice of the fourth living creature say, "Come and see!" [8]I looked and saw a pale horse, and the name of the rider was Death, and Hell followed him. And authority was given them over a fourth of the earth to kill with the sword, famine, pestilence and wild beasts of the earth.

The Fifth Seal: The Martyred Souls

9 And when He opened the fifth seal I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been killed because of the Word of God and because of the stand they had taken. [10]They kept crying out in a loud voice, "O Almighty Ruler, the Holy One, the True! How long will You wait until You will sit as Judge and avenge our blood on those who live on the earth?" [11]Each one of them then was given a white robe,

and they were told to be patient yet a little while until their number should be filled up by their fellow servants and their brethren, all to be slain as also they themselves had been.

The Sixth Seal: Earthquake and Signs of Judgment

12 When He opened the sixth seal I saw a great earthquake. The sun turned black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood. 13The stars in the sky fell to the earth, just as a fig tree sheds its unripe fruit before the force of a high wind. 14The sky disappeared, folding up like a scroll, and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

15 And men hid themselves in caves and among the rocks in the mountains. The kings of the earth fled with their princes and captains, their men of wealth and of might. In fact, everyone, slave and free, fled. 16And they said to the mountains and the rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the sight of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17For the great Day of His anger has come and who can stand before it?"

CHAPTER 7

The Sealing of the Servants of God

AFTER this I saw four angels. They were standing at the four corners of the earth and were holding in check the four winds of the earth, so that no wind might blow on the earth or on the sea or against any tree. 2Next, I saw still another angel come, ascending from the rising sun. He had the seal of the Living God, and in a loud voice he called out to the four angels who had been given power to injure both land and sea. 3He said, "Wait — do not harm the earth or the sea or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads."

4 Then I heard the number of those sealed, out of every
tribe of the sons of Israel, a hundred and forty-four thou-
sand. 5There were twelve thousand sealed from the tribe of
Judah, twelve thousand from the tribe of Reuben, twelve
thousand from the tribe of Gad. 6Also, from the tribe of
Asher twelve thousand were sealed, twelve thousand from
the tribe of Naphthali, and twelve thousand from the tribe
of Manasseh. 7And twelve thousand were sealed from the
tribe of Simeon, twelve thousand from the tribe of Levi,
and twelve thousand from the tribe of Isaachar. 8Likewise,
twelve thousand were sealed of the tribe of Zebulon, twelve
thousand of the tribe of Joseph, and twelve thousand of the
tribe of Benjamin.

The Triumph of the Tribulation Saints

9 After this I looked and saw a great crowd that no one
could number. They came from every nation, tribe, people
and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the
Lamb, and they wore white robes and held palms in their
hands. 10And they cried out with a loud voice, "Salvation
belongs to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to
the Lamb!"

11 Then all the angels who stood round the throne and
round the elders and the four living creatures fell on their
faces before the throne and worshiped God. 12And they said,
"Amen! Blessing and glory, wisdom and thanksgiving, honor
and power and strength be to our God forever and ever!
Amen!"

13 Then one of the elders spoke to me and asked, "Who
are these people clothed in white robes? And where do they
come from?" 14I answered him, "My lord, you must know."
Then he said to me, "Yes, these are they who have come
out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes
and have made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
15Because of this they are now before the throne of God
and they serve Him day and night in His temple. And He

who sits on the throne will spread His tent over them.
16They will hunger no more, nor will they thirst any more.
Nor will the sun strike them, nor any scorching heat.
17And the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will be their
Shepherd. He will lead them to the springs of living waters,
and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes!"

CHAPTER 8

The Seventh Seal: Silence in Heaven; The Seven Trumpets

AND when He broke open the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for about half an hour.

2 And now I saw seven angels standing before God, and seven trumpets were given to them. 3And another angel holding a golden censer came and stood at the altar. He was then given much incense to mingle with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar before the throne. 4And the smoke of the incense rose together with the prayers of the saints before God out of the hand of the angel. 5Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it down on the earth. And there came peals of thunder, noises, flashes of lightning, and an earthquake. 6The seven angels who had the seven trumpets now made preparations to sound their trumpets.

The First Trumpet (Hail and Fire)

7 So the first angel blew his trumpet, and there followed a rain of hail and fire, mingled with blood. This fell on the earth, burning up a third part of the earth, a third part of the trees, and all the green grass.

The Second Trumpet (Volcano and Sea of Blood)

8 When the second angel sounded his trumpet, it seemed as though a great mountain, burning with fire, was blown into the sea. 9A third of the sea then became blood, a third

of the animals that lived in the sea died, and a third of the ships were wrecked.

The Third Trumpet (Falling Star)

10 Next, the third angel blew his trumpet, and a great star fell out of the sky. It blazed like a torch as it fell, landing on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. 11The name of this star is Apsinthus, meaning wormwood, for one-third of the waters turned to wormwood, and many people died of the waters after they turned bitter.

The Fourth Trumpet (Eclipse)

12 Then the fourth angel blew his trumpet, a third of the sun, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars were blasted, so that a third of their light was darkened, and a third part of the day, and likewise of the night, had no light. 13Then, in my vision, I heard an angel, as he was flying in midheaven, cry out in a loud voice, "Woe, woe, woe! to all who live on the earth, because the three other angels are about to blow their trumpets!"

CHAPTER 9

The Fifth Trumpet (The First Woe: Locusts)

WHEN the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, I saw a star fall from the sky to the earth, and the key to the bottomless pit was given to the angel. 2And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke rose from the pit like the smoke from a mighty furnace, and the sun was darkened, and also the air, because of the smoke from the pit.

3 And out of the smoke locusts came out upon the earth, and power was given to them like the power of scorpions. 4They were ordered not to damage the grass of the earth, or any green growth or any tree. They were to harm only such of mankind as did not have the seal of God on their

foreheads. [5]The locusts had orders not to kill, but to keep on torturing for five months. Their torture was like that of a scorpion when it stings a man. [6]When those days come men will seek death, but they will never find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

7 In appearance the locusts were like horses armed for battle. They seemed to have crowns of gold on their heads, and their faces were like the faces of men. [8]Their hair was like the hair of women and their teeth were like those of lions. [9]Their breastplates were like iron, and the sound of their wings was like the noise of many chariots, drawn by horses, rushing into battle.

10 Their tails and stings were like those of scorpions, and it was in their tails that they had their power to harm men for five months. [11]They had as their king the angel of the bottomless pit. His name in Hebrew is Abaddon, but his name in Greek is Apollyon. [12]When this first woe is past, two more woes are yet to come!

The Sixth Trumpet (The Second Woe: Armies)

13 The trumpet of the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice that came from the four horns of the golden altar standing before God. [14]It gave orders to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are imprisoned at the great river Euphrates." [15]Thereupon these four angels were released. They had been held in readiness, waiting for the year, the month, the day and the hour that they were to go out and kill one-third of mankind. [16]The number in the army of horsemen was twice ten thousand times ten thousand (two hundred million). I heard their number.

17 And in my vision I saw the horses and their riders. Their breastplates were fiery red, reddish blue and yellow. The heads of the horses were like the heads of lions, and fire, smoke and brimstone issued out of their mouths. [18]These were the three plagues by which one third of mankind was killed — the fire, the smoke and the brimstone that came

out of their mouth. [19]The power of the horses is in their mouths and their tails. For their tails are like serpents, having heads, by means of which they make wounds.

20 The rest of mankind that escaped being killed by these plagues did not even repent of the works of their hands, but they kept on worshiping devils and idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood, things that can neither see, hear nor walk. [21]Nor did they repent of their murders, sorceries, immoralities or thefts.

CHAPTER 10

The Vision of the Little Book

THEN I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven. He was robed in a cloud and had a rainbow around his head. His face was like the sun and his feet were like pillars of fire. [2]He had in his hand a little book, which was open. He placed his right foot upon the sea and his left foot upon the land. [3]And he cried out with a loud voice like the roar of a lion and, when he had cried out, the seven thunders uttered their voices. [4]Then when the seven thunders had sounded, I was ready to write. But I heard a voice from heaven say, "Keep secret what the seven thunders said. Do not write it down."

5 The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land then lifted up his right hand toward heaven. [6]And he swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created the sky, the earth, the sea and everything in them, that there should be no more delay. [7]Also that in the days when the seventh angel is about to blow his trumpet, God's secret, which He had told his servants the prophets, will be fulfilled.

The Eating of the Book

8 The voice that I had heard from heaven then spoke to me once more. It said, "Go and take the little book which

is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." [9]Going to the angel then, I said to him, "Give me the little book." But he answered me, "Yes, take it, but eat it up. It will seem bitter in your stomach, but sweet as honey in your mouth."

10 I took the little book out of the angel's hand and I ate it. It tasted sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. [11]Then he said to me, "You must again prophesy about many peoples, nations, tongues and kings."

CHAPTER 11

The Vision of the Measuring Rod

A MEASURING rod like a staff was then given me. The orders followed, "Rise up and measure God's temple and altar and those who worship there. [2]But omit the court within the temple. Do not measure it, because it was given over to the Gentiles, and they will trample over the Holy City for forty-two months. [3]To my two witnesses I will give power to prophesy, and they will prophesy for twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth.

The Two Witnesses and Their Prophecy

4 "These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks that stand before the Lord of the earth. [5]And if anyone should want to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and destroys their foes. So if anyone should try to hurt them, he would be killed in that way. [6]These have the power to shut the sky so that no rain will fall during the days when they are prophesying. They can also turn water into blood, and they can smite the earth with every plague as often as they please.

Death of the Witnesses

7 "But when they have completed their witnessing, the

beast that comes up from the bottomless pit will make war on them. He will overcome them and kill them. [8]Their dead bodies will then lie in the streets of the great city, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, where their Lord was also crucified. [9]For three and one-half days some will come from the peoples, tribes, tongues and nations to look at their dead bodies, and they will not let them be buried. [10]And those who then live here on earth will gloat over them, and they will make merry and exchange presents because these two prophets had been a torment to the inhabitants of the earth."

Resurrection of the Witnesses

11 But after three and one-half days the breath of life from God came into them again, and they got up on their feet. A great fear fell on those who saw them. [12]Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here!" And in the view of their enemies they ascended to heaven in a cloud. [13]And in that hour there was an earthquake causing the destruction of a tenth of the city. In the earthquake seven thousand people were killed. The rest became terrified, but gave glory to the God of heaven. [14]The second woe came to an end. But see, the third woe will soon come!

The Seventh Trumpet (Judgment Day)

15 Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, at which loud voices in heaven began to say, "The kingdoms of the world have become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"

16 Then the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God. [17]And they said, "Lord God Almighty, You who are and who were, we give You thanks, because You have taken Your great power and are sovereign. [18]The nations have raged but Your wrath has come, and the time has come for the judging of

the dead and for the regarding of Your servants — the prophets and saints and those who fear Your name, both small and great — and for the destroying of the destroyers of the earth."

19 God's temple in heaven was then thrown open and the ark containing His covenant was seen inside the temple, and there followed flashes of lightning, rumblings and thunder crashes, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.

CHAPTER 12

The Woman Clothed With the Sun

THEN a great sign appeared in the sky — a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. [2]She was pregnant, and cried out in agony in her birth-pangs. [3]Another sign appeared in the sky, a monstrous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. [4]His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down on the earth. The dragon took his stand in front of the woman who was about to give birth to a child, in order that he might devour the child as soon as it was born.

The Birth of the Son

5 She gave birth to a son, and he was to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but the child was caught up to God and to His throne. [6]The woman then fled into the wilderness where she found a place prepared for her by God where she could be fed for a thousand two hundred and sixty days.

The War in Heaven

7 Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels went out to fight against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. [8]But they did not win and therefore

there was no longer any room for them in heaven. [9]And so the great dragon, the old serpent who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, was hurled down to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

10 I then heard a loud voice in heaven say, "Now has salvation come, and the power and kingdom of God and the authority of His Christ, because the accuser of our brethren, the one who kept accusing them day and night before our God, has been thrown down. [11]They defeated him by the blood of the Lamb and by the preaching of the Word, and not by loving their own lives; they were willing to die. [12]Rejoice therefore, O heaven and you who dwell therein! But woe to those who inhabit the land and the sea, for the devil has come down to you! His fury is great for he knows that his time is short."

The War on Earth

13 When the dragon saw that he had been cast down upon the earth, he went in pursuit of the woman who had given birth to the male child. [14]Then the woman was given two wings of a great eagle in order to fly to her place in the desert, where she was to get her meals for a time of twelve hundred and sixty days. [15]The serpent cast a flood of water out of his mouth after the woman, like a river, to carry her away. [16]But the earth gave help to the woman, for the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river which the dragon had poured out of its mouth. [17]Then the dragon, enraged at the woman, went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, as many as keep God's commandments and as have the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER 13

The First Beast: the Antichrist

AND I stood on the sand of the seashore. There I saw a beast coming up out of the sea. It had ten horns

and seven heads, and on its horns were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names. [2]The beast before me was like a leopard, with feet like those of a bear and with a mouth like that of a lion. And the dragon gave to the beast his power, his throne and his great authority. [3]One of his heads, as I saw it, had been mortally wounded. But this mortal wound healed and the whole world followed after the beast in adoration. [4]Men did homage to the dragon because he had given authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, too, and kept on saying, "Who is a match for this beast? And who can go to war against him?"

The Work of the Antichrist

5 And the beast was given a mouth with power to boast mightily and to blaspheme, and also freedom to exercise authority for forty-two months. [6]He did so. He opened his mouth to blaspheme and to curse God's name and His heaven and those who dwell therein. [7]He was also permitted to make war on the saints and to overcome them. This authority given him extended to every tribe, people, language and nation. [8]All the inhabitants of the earth will bow down to him, all except those whose names had been written before the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb that was slain. [9]So let him who has an ear, hear this: [10]He who takes others captive must himself go to prison. He who kills others by the sword will himself be slain by the sword! In this is a reason for the patience and faith of the Christian saints.

The Second Beast: the False Prophet

11 I then saw the second beast rising out of the earth. He had two horns like a lamb, but he spoke like a dragon. [12]He exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence. He makes the whole world and its people give worship to the first beast who had recovered from his death wound. [13]He works great miracles, even causing fire to come

down from the sky to the earth before the eyes of men. 14The people of the earth are deceived because of the signs that he was allowed to perform before the beast and because of his order that they make an image to the beast that had been wounded by the sword and yet lived. 15He had power also to give breath to the image of the beast so that the image of the beast could even speak, and so that he might put to death all those who refused to worship the image of the beast.

The Mark of the Beast

16 He gives to all alike a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. This applies to both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave. 17This means that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, which is either the name of the beast or the number of the name. 18Here wisdom is needed. One who has understanding must count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man. And his number is six hundred and sixty-six.

CHAPTER 14

The Lamb on Mount Zion

I LOOKED and saw the Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and there were with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand with His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads! 2Then I heard a voice from heaven like the noise of many waters and like the sound of heavy thunder. And I heard also a sound like that of harpists playing on their harps. 3And they sang what seemed to be a new song before the throne and before the living creatures and the elders. And no one could learn this song except the hundred forty-four thousand who had been ransomed from the earth. 4These are they who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the

Lamb wherever He may go. These have been ransomed for God and the Lamb as first-fruits from among men. [5]No lie was found on their lips, and they stand blameless before the throne of God.

The Angels of Judgment

6 Then I saw an angel flying in midheaven. He had the everlasting Gospel to give to those who dwell on earth, of every nation, tribe, tongue and people. [7]With a loud voice he proclaimed, "Fear God and give Him praise, for the hour of His judgment has come. Worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and the fountains of water."

8 A second angel followed, and he said, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great city, because she made all the nations drunk with the maddening wine of her fornication!"

9 Next came a third angel saying with a loud voice, "This is a word to anyone who worships the beast and his image, to anyone who gets the mark on his forehead or on his hand. [10]Such a one, too, shall drink of the wine of God's anger, poured out undiluted from the cup of His vengeance. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. [11]The smoke of their torture will go up forever and ever, and they will have no rest by day or night, these worshipers of the beast and his image and all who carry the mark of his name. [12]Here is a call for the saints — those who obey God's commands and hold to faith in Jesus — to hold out."

13 Then I heard a voice from Heaven saying, "Blessed are the dead who from now on die in the Lord!" "Yes," the Spirit answered, "let them rest from their labors, for their works will go with them!"

The Vision of Armageddon

14 I looked and saw a white cloud, and seated on the cloud was one like the Son of Man. He had a gold crown on His head and held a sharp sickle in His hand. [15]Another

angel now came out of the temple, and he cried out with a loud voice to Him who was seated on the cloud, "Lay hold of Your sickle and reap, for the time to reap is here, since the harvest of the earth is ripe!"

16 Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle upon the earth and the earth was reaped.

17 Then another angel came out of the temple in heaven, and he, too, had a sharp sickle. 18And still another angel came out from the altar. He had authority over fire. And he called out in a loud voice to the angel who had the sharp sickle, "Use your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of grapes from the earth's vineyard, for the grapes are now fully ripe!" 19So the angel swung his sickle down to the earth and gathered in the earth's vintage. And this he threw into the great winepress of God's wrath. 20The winepress, with its grapes, was trodden outside the city, and blood streamed from the winepress, reaching up as high as the bridles of the horses and reaching out a distance of two hundred miles.

CHAPTER 15

The Vision of the Angels and the Seven Plagues

I SAW another sign in the sky, a great and wonderful sign. There were seven angels with seven plagues. These were to be the last, because in them God's wrath has come to complete expression.

2 Now I saw something that seemed to be a sea of glass mixed with fire. And those who had conquered the beast, his image, and the number of his name were standing on the glassy sea holding harps given them by God. 3And they sang the song of Moses, God's servant, and the song of the Lamb, as follows: "O Lord God Almighty! Great and wonderful are Your works. Just and true are Your ways, O King of the Ages! 4Who should not fear You, O Lord? Who should not give glory to Your name? For only You are holy.

All nations will come and worship You, for Your righteousness has been shown!"

5 Again I looked and saw the temple, that is, the tabernacle of the testimony, thrown open in heaven. 6And out of the temple came the seven angels holding the seven plagues. They were dressed in clean white linen and had golden girdles round their breasts. 7Then one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God who lives forever and ever. 8And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His might. And no one could go into the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were at an end.

CHAPTER 16

The First Bowl of the Wrath of God: Painful Sores

OUT of the temple I heard a loud voice say to the seven angels, "Go and pour out upon the earth the bowls of God's wrath!" 2So the first angel went and poured out his bowl on the earth, which caused loathsome and painful sores to come upon those who had the mark of the beast and who worshiped his image.

The Second Bowl: Death in the Sea

3 The second angel emptied his bowl into the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead man, and every living thing in the sea died.

The Third Bowl: Blood to Drink

4 The third angel emptied his bowl into the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood. 5I heard the angel of the waters say, "You are just in Your judgments, O Holy One, You who are and were. 6For men have shed the blood of Your saints and prophets, and You have now given them blood to drink. They are getting justice." 7And I heard an

echo from the altar, "Yes, Lord God Almighty! Your judgments are true and just!"

The Fourth Bowl: Scorching Heat

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and it was given power to scorch men with its fiery heat. 9And as men were scorched by the terrible heat, they cursed the name of God who had control over these plagues, but they did not repent nor did they give Him any praise.

The Fifth Bowl: Darkness

10 The fifth angel emptied his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom was plunged into darkness, and men in their distress gnawed their tongues. 11And they cursed God in heaven on account of their sufferings and their sores, but they did not repent of what they had done.

The Sixth Bowl: Dried-up Euphrates

12 The sixth angel poured his bowl into the Euphrates, that great river, and its water dried up to prepare the way for the kings from the East (the rising sun).

The Vision of the Three Unclean Spirits

13 Then I saw three foul spirits, like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon and from the mouth of the beast and from the mouth of the false prophet. 14They are demon spirits that perform miracles, and they go out to the kings of the earth and the peoples of the whole world to muster them for battle when that great Day of God the Almighty comes. 15It is written, "See! I am coming like a thief." Blessed is he who keeps watch and holds on to his garments that he may not go naked and be put to shame. 16So they assembled them at a place which in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

The Seventh Bowl: Earthquake and Hail

17 The seventh angel emptied his bowl upon the air, and

a loud voice was heard coming out of the temple, from the throne. It said, "It is done." [18]Then came lightning flashes, the sound of voices, thundering and a great earthquake. There has never been such an earthquake since men peopled this earth, it was so great! [19]And the great city was torn into three parts, while the cities of the nations fell. And Babylon, the great city, was remembered by God, so He made her drain the winecup of the fury of His anger. [20]Every island vanished and not a mountain could be found. [21]Huge hailstones of immense weight poured down on men from the skies, and men cursed God on account of the plague of hail, so very terrible it was.

CHAPTER 17

The Beast and the Harlot

ONE of the seven angels who had the seven bowls of wrath came and spoke to me. "Come," he said, "and I will show you how judgment falls on the great harlot who sits where many waters meet. [2]The kings of the earth have committed adultery with her and the peoples of the earth have become intoxicated with the wine of her impurities."

3 And in the Spirit he carried me away into a desert. I saw a woman sitting there upon a scarlet beast covered with blasphemous names. The beast had seven heads and ten horns. [4]The woman was dressed in purple and scarlet and was bedecked with gold, precious stones and pearls. In her hand she held a golden cup full of things accursed, the filth of her lewdness. [5]On her forehead was written her name, of symbolic meaning, "Babylon the Great, mother of harlots and all that is abominable on earth." [6]I took a look at the woman, drunk as she was with the blood of the saints and the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. When I saw her I marveled and was filled with great wonder.

The Explanation of the Beast

7 But the angel asked, "Why do you marvel? I shall disclose to you what the mystery about this woman is, and also about the beast with seven heads and ten horns on which she rides. 8As to the beast you saw, he was, but is no more. But he is to come out of the bottomless pit again and then go back to perdition. Then those people on the earth whose names have not been written in the Book of Life from the beginning of the world, will also marvel when they see the beast, because it was, then was no more, and is to come.

9 "Here is a task for a mind with wisdom: The seven heads are the seven hills on which the woman is seated. 10They are also seven kings, of whom five have fallen. One is still alive; the other has not yet come, and when he does he will stay only a little while. 11The beast that was and then was no more is himself an eighth king, although he belongs to the seven, but destruction will be his lot.

12 "Then, as to the ten horns you saw, they are also ten kings who have not yet obtained a kingdom, but they are to get authority as kings along with the beast, but only for one hour. 13All these, being of the same mind, give their might and authority over to the beast. 14They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will defeat them because He is Lord of lords and King of kings. Those who are with Him have been called chosen and found faithful."

Explanation of the Harlot

15 Continuing, he said to me, "The waters that you saw, where the harlot was seated, represent peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues. 16As for the ten horns that you saw, and the beast, they will hate the harlot and make her poor and naked, will eat her flesh and burn up the remains with fire. 17For God has put it into their hearts to carry out His will. Then, being of one mind, they turn their kingdom over to the beast until God's purposes are carried out in full.

[18]As for the woman you saw, she is the great city that exercises kingship over the kings of the earth."

CHAPTER 18

Judgment on Babylon Proclaimed

AFTER this I saw another angel descend from heaven with great authority. The earth was lighted up with his splendor. [2]And he cried with a powerful voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become the abode of devils, a stronghold of every foul spirit, a haunt of every bird, foul and hateful. [3]For all the nations have fallen through drinking the wine of her evil desires, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich from the wealth of her wantonness."

The Saints Warned

4 Then I heard another voice from heaven say, "My people, come out of her! Come out, so as not to have a share with her in her sins, and so as not to suffer from her plagues. [5]For her sins reach up to high heaven and God remembers her sinfulness. [6]Do to her as she has done to you; yes, pay her double for what she has done. Mix a double dose for her in the cup she has mixed for others. [7]In the same measure in which she lived in pride and luxury, give her a like measure of torment and grief. In her heart she says, 'I sit here a queen, no, not a widow, and I shall never know sorrow.' [8]Because of this, her plague — death, mourning and famine — will overtake her in a single day — and she shall be burned with fire. Yes, the Lord who is her Judge is powerful.

Lament Over the Fall of Babylon

9 "The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep for her and bewail her,

when they see the smoke from her burning. [10]They will stand afar off for fear of her torment and will cry, 'Alas, alas, O Babylon, you great city, you mighty city! In one hour your judgment has come to pass!' [11]The merchants of the earth will weep and mourn for her, since no one will buy their merchandise any more — [12]no cargoes of gold or silver, precious stones or pearls, fine linen, purple, silk and scarlet, no kind of scent or costly wood, no bronze, iron or marble. [13]Likewise, no shipments of cinnamon, spice, incense, myrrh, frankincense, wine, oil, finest flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and carriages, slaves and the souls of men.

14 "The ripe fruits your soul longed for are gone from you, your dainties and your good things are lost to you, and you will never again find them.' [15]The dealers in these wares who had riches through her will stand back at a distance in fear of her torture, and they will weep and mourn aloud. [16]'Alas!' they will say. 'Alas for the great city that was clothed in fine linen, in purple and scarlet, that was adorned with gold, jewels and pearls! [17]For in a single hour this great wealth has been destroyed!'

"And every sea-captain and all who travel by sea, the sailors and all whose trade is by way of the sea, held back afar off. [18]When they saw the smoke from her burning they cried out, 'What city was ever like this great city?' [19]And as they wept and mourned they put dust on their heads and bewailed, 'Alas, alas, for the great city! Here all who had ships on the sea could get rich through her extravagance, yet in one hour she has been made desolate!'

The Judgment Symbolically Proclaimed

20 "Rejoice over her, O heaven! And you saints, apostles and prophets, rejoice because God has avenged you on her!" [21]Then a strong angel took a stone like a great millstone and hurled it into the sea, saying, "With such force shall Babylon, the great city, be hurled to destruction and shall never again be found. [22]No more shall the sound of harpists and

minstrels, of flute players and trumpeters be heard in you.
23No light of any lamp will shine in you again. No longer
will there be heard in you the voice of bridegroom and
bride. For your merchants were once the great lords of the
earth, and all the nations of the world were led astray by
your sorcery. 24And in her was found the blood of prophets
and saints and of all who have been put to death here on
earth."

CHAPTER 19

The Four Hallelujahs of the Glorified Saints

AFTER this I heard a great multitude in heaven
saying loudly, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, honor and
power belong to the Lord our God. 2For His judgments are
true and righteous. See! He has judged the great harlot who
corrupted the earth with her prostitution, and He has pun-
ished her for the blood of His servants." 3A second time
they shouted, "Hallelujah! Her smoke goes up forever and
ever."

4 Then the twenty-four elders and the four living crea-
tures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne,
and they said, "Amen! Hallelujah!" 5And a voice came out
of the throne saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants!
You who fear Him, small and great, praise Him!" 6Then I
heard again what seemed like the song of a great multitude,
like the roar of many waters and the crash of many thunder-
peals. These are the words: "Hallelujah! It is the Lord our
God, the Almighty, who reigns!

The Marriage of the Lamb

7 "Let us then rejoice and be exceeding glad. Let us give
Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His
Bride has made herself ready! 8She was permitted to be
dressed in fine linen, bright and pure, for the fine linen
represents the upright deeds of the saints."

9 The angel said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who
are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' " And he
added, "These are the true words of God." [10]Then I fell
down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "Never
do that! I am only a fellow servant with yourself and your
brethren, believing in the testimony of Jesus. God is the one
to worship! The Gospel of Jesus is what has inspired
prophecy."

The Return of Christ in Glory

11 In my vision I then saw heaven opened, and behold,
a white horse appeared! He who sat on it was called the
Faithful and True. In justice He judges and makes war.
[12]His eyes are as a flame of fire, and on His head are many
diadems. His name, inscribed there, no one knows except
Himself. [13]The clothing He wore had been dipped in blood
and the name that He went by was, "The Word of God."
[14]The armies of heaven, clad in fine linen, white and pure,
and mounted on white horses, followed Him.

15 Out of His mouth issues a sharp sword with which to
smite the heathen, and He will rule over them with a rod
of iron. He will also tread the winepress of the fierce anger
of God the Almighty. [16]On His cloak and on His thigh this
title is given Him: King of kings and Lord of lords!

The Battle of Armageddon

17 Then I saw an angel as he stood in the sun. He
cried out with a loud voice, speaking to the birds that fly
in midheaven, "Come, gather together at God's great supper!
[18]You may there eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of chief
captains and of strong men, the flesh of horses and their
riders, the flesh of all mankind, both free and slave, both
small and great."

19 After this I saw the beast and the kings of the earth
muster their armies to make war against Him who sits on
the horse, and against His army. [20]And the beast was cap-

tured, and with Him also the false prophet who had performed miracles in his presence, by which he had misled those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. Both of these were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone. [21]The rest were slain by Him who sat on the horse — slain by His sword, the sword that comes out of His mouth. And all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

CHAPTER 20

Satan Bound for a Thousand Years

I SAW, too, an angel descending from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit, and a great chain. [2]He seized the dragon, that old serpent who is none other than the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. [3]He then trust him down into the pit and locked him up there and set a seal over him. He was not to deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years had come to an end. After that he had to be loosed again, but only for a little while.

The Millenial Kingdom

4 I saw thrones also, and on them were seated those who were to be judges. I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their love of Christ and God's Word, and because they would not worship the beast or his image, and because they did not bear his mark upon their brow and upon their hand. These, then, came to life once more and reigned as kings with Christ for a thousand years. [5]As for the rest of the dead, they did not come to life again until the thousand years had come to an end. [6]So blessed and holy is he who has a part in the first resurrection! Over such the second death holds no sway. All these will be priests of God, priests of Christ, and they will reign with Him a thousand years.

Satan's Release and Doom

7 Then, when the thousand years are over, Satan will be
released from his prison. 8And he will go out again to de-
ceive the peoples that live in the four corners of the earth —
Gog and Magog — and to muster them for battle, as many
as the sands of the seashore. 9They marched over the broad
expanse of the earth and encircled the camp of the saints
and the beloved city. Fire then came down from the skies
and consumed them. 10Then the devil, who had led them
astray, was flung into the lake of fire and sulphur where the
beast and the false prophet are, there to be tormented day
and night forever and ever!

The Last Judgment

11 I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it.
Both earth and sky fled from His sight so far that they could
not be found. 12And as I looked I saw the books opened,
as the dead, both small and great, came before the throne.
There was also another book opened, namely, the Book of
Life. All the dead were judged by what was written in the
books, according to their deeds. 13The sea gave up its dead,
and death and hades gave up their dead. All were to be
judged, everyone by what he had done. 14Then death and
hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire
is the second death. 15Everyone whose name was not found
in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

CHAPTER 21

God's Dwelling Place

THEN I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The
first heaven and the first earth were no more, and the sea
had passed away. 2And I, John, saw the holy city, the new
Jerusalem, come down from God out of heaven, dressed like
a bride prepared to meet her husband. 3Then I heard a great

voice from the throne announce, "See! God's tabernacle is with men, and He will dwell among them and they will be His people. Yes, God himself will be with them! 4And God himself will wipe away every tear from their eyes. No longer will there be any death, sorrow, weeping or distress, for the former things have passed away." 5"See!" said He who sat upon the throne, "I make all things new." And again He said to me, "Record it, for these words are trustworthy and true."

The Alpha and Omega

6 He then said to me, "It is done! I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last! I will freely give water to the thirsty from the fountain of life. 7The victor will have these things as his heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8But as for the fearful, the unbelievers, the abominable, murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolators and everyone who is false, their lot is in the lake that burns with fiery sulphur, and that is the second death!"

The New Jerusalem

9 One of the angels then came to me — one who had had the seven bowls laden with the seven plagues — and said, "Come here, let me show you the Bride, the Lamb's wife." 10Then, as in a trance, he carried me to a mountain, great and high, and showed me that great city Jerusalem, the holy city, coming down out of heaven from God. 11She possessed all the glory of God with radiance like a very precious stone such as a jasper, clear as crystal.

12 The city had a wall, great and high, with twelve gates, and at the gates were twelve angels, and on the gates were carved the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel. 13There were three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14The wall of the city had twelve foundations with names on them, one for each of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

Details of the New Jerusalem

15 He who was talking to me had a golden measuring
rod with which to measure the city, her gates and walls.
16The city lies foursquare, so her length is the same as her
breadth. He took the measure of the city with his rod and
found that she was one thousand five hundred miles in
length, and exactly the same in breadth and height. 17He
measured also the wall, which was two hundred and sixteen
feet, after the measurement used by man and also by the
angel.

18 The material in the wall was jasper, but that of the
city was pure gold, clear as glass. 19The foundations of the
city walls were adorned with every sort of precious stone.
On the first was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third,
chalcedony; the fourth, emerald. 20And the fifth, sardonyx;
the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eight, beryl;
the ninth, topaz; the tenth, chrysoprase; the eleventh, jacinth;
and the twelfth, amethyst.

21 The twelve gates were twelve pearls, each being made
of a single pearl. And the street of the city was of pure gold,
as transparent as glass. 22But I saw no temple in the city,
for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple.
23The city has no need of sun or moon to shine on her, for
the glory of God gives her light, and the Lamb is her lamp.

24 The nations that have been saved will walk by this
light. The kings of the earth will bring their glory and honor
into it. 25Her gates will never be closed by day, and there
will be no night there. 26And they will bring the glory and
honor of the nations into it. 27But nothing that defiles will
ever come into the city, nor anyone who practices wicked
and false living, but only those who have their names in the
Lamb's Book of Life.

CHAPTER 22

The Water, Fruit and Light of the New Jerusalem

THEN he showed me the pure river of living water. It was bright as crystal and flowed from the throne of God and of the Lamb. [2]It was in the middle of the street, and on either side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit and yielding fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

3 There will be nothing there with a curse on it. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and His servants will worship Him. [4]They will see His face, and His name will be on their brows. [5]There will be no night there. Nor will they have need of light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will give them light and they will reign forever and ever.

6 Then He said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. For the Lord, the God of the holy prophets, has sent His angel to show His servants the things that must soon take place. [7]Behold," He said to me, "I am coming soon! And blessed is he who gives heed to the words of the prophecy in this book."

The Last Message of the Bible — Christ's Return

8 It was I, John, who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down at the feet of the angel who showed them to me, to worship him. [9]"No," he said to me, "you must not do that, for I am only your fellow servant, as I am also of your brethren the prophets and of those who keep the words of this book. It is God whom you must worship!"

10 He said also, "The time is near, so do not seal up the words of prophecy in this book. [11]Until then let the unrighteous keep on being unrighteous, and let the filthy still

be filthy. But let also the righteous still be righteous, and the holy still be holy!"

12 Behold, I am coming soon! And I will bring My reward with Me, to pay each one according to his deeds. 13I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. 14Blessed are they who wash their robes (that do His commandments) so as to have the right to the tree of life and to enter the city gates. 15The dogs — the sorcerers and fornicators, the murderers, idolators and everyone who loves and lives a lie — are on the outside.

16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to you with this message to the churches: I am the Root and the Offspring of David; I am the Bright and Morning Star!"

17 The Spirit and the Bride say, "Come!" Let also the hearer say, "Come!" And let him who is thirsty come, and let him who so desires take of the water of life freely!

Final Warning and Promise

18 I now warn everyone who hears the words of prophecy of this book that if he should add anything to what is said, God will inflict on him the plagues that are recorded in this book. 19And if anyone takes away anything from the words of this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his place in the Book of Life, and in the holy city, and the things recorded in this book. 20He who gives witness to this says, "I will surely come soon." Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus!

21 The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with His saints! Amen!

The Psalms for Today

The PSALMS for Today

A New Translation from the Hebrew into Current English

by

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PREFACE

This translation represents an attempt to convey the thought-forms and sentiments of the ancient Hebrew Psalmists in a more modern style than is generally found in English versions of *The Psalms.* Earlier recensions have contributed greatly to our understanding of the poetry of Israel by their elegance of expression, but they have also succeeded in obscuring the meaning of some significant passages, and of conveying the impression of partial or complete unintelligibility with regard to others.

The present writer has undertaken an entire retranslation of *The Psalms* from the Massoretic text, and has paid particular attention to the archaeological discoveries at Ras Shamra (Ugarit), which have thrown considerable light on hitherto obscure expressions and allusions. He has been at pains to remove many of the anthropomorphisms which have been an integral feature of earlier translations, and to replace them with synonymous expressions which in some cases represent a more accurate translation of the Hebrew.

While sacrificing the melodious language of the medieval English period for the more factual phraseology of the present time, an attempt has been made to preserve the poetic structure without, however, following the Hebrew rhythmic and parallel forms too closely and also avoiding a translation in rhyme. This has been done in the belief that the ancient poetry of Israel is amenable to that type of modern interpretation which will bring out clearly the thought in the mind of the composer. In this way it will be possible to discern somewhat more readily the significance of the message which these ancient Psalms have for the modern generation. The vocative form of address to the Deity has been replaced by a possessive rendering, since the former is not commonly used in modern speech. The tetragrammaton YHWH is generally rendered *the Lord,* though not invariably so, especially where the needs of the context seemed to require a somewhat different translation. A short un-

technical introduction provides some background for an understanding of the origin and development of the Hebrew Psalter.

In the preparation of this book I received the kindly encouragement and advice of a former colleague, the late Rt. Rev. W. T. T. Hallam, who provided the original stimulus for the work. I am also indebted to my wife for her interest in the project, and for her suggestive criticism of the manuscript at all stages of its preparation.

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INTRODUCTION

The Hebrew Psalms enshrine the characteristic features of Israelite culture and religious tradition in their concept of an idealistic separateness, their rejection of pagan and idolatrous affiliations, and their insistence upon Jehovah as the one true God of the universe. Generally speaking, in the more devotional type of composition, the writer attempts to approach God on the basis of spiritual fellowship, and in consequence there is a strong emphasis on the relationship existing between worshiper and Deity. Personal, national and social issues find expression in *The Psalms,* for these writings, more than any others in the ancient world, reflect the inner workings of the human spirit in relation to the world and God. In a real sense they are timeless, because the topics with which they deal are fundamental to the outworking of the human constitution, and for this reason they recur from age to age.

We shall find very little, if any, of the Babylonian epic spirit in the Hebrew poetry of the Psalter. The pagan deities of the Gilgamesh Epic have no counterpart in the compositions of the Israelites, and foreign gods generally are the object of scathing comment and denunciation. The Hebrews felt a sense of vocation because they stood in a covenant relation with Jehovah their God, and this inner conviction of supremacy and moral elevation over surrounding nations is clearly expressed in their poetic writings.

The Old Testament Canon, or list of books, is divided in the Hebrew text into three sections, the last of which contains the bulk of the Old Testament poetic material, with *The Book of Psalms* coming at the beginning of the list. In the Hebrew, the Psalms are called "Praises," which is a general name for the Psalter, without, however, characterising each of the Psalms. Individual compositions are described in their titles as "songs," "prayers," and the like, depending upon the nature of the content.

The title "song" is derived from a Hebrew root meaning "to pluck," as with the fingers, which would be used in some

form of musical accompaniment to the Psalm as it was sung. Undoubtedly this is significant for the origin of many of the Psalms, showing that the Psalmist was often a lone minstrel, bringing his particular problems, hopes and fears to the Deity in the assurance that God would hear and answer. Of all the Psalms in the Psalter, probably only the last half dozen or so were composed expressly for choral performance in Divine worship, while others may have been adapted to that end. By nature, then, the Hebrew Psalms are predominantly individual compositions, arising out of many and varied situations in life and representing poetic activity over a number of centuries.

It is customary to classify Psalms by grouping together those compositions which are similar in character or content. Sometimes a Psalm will fall into more than one category, and this is especially true where the style changes as the composition proceeds. The principal types of Psalms are songs of praise, confessions of sin, prayers, intercessory Psalms, instructional compositions, historical Psalms, and those which are written from the standpoint of praise for the Jewish Law or Torah. These, of course, are only general classifications, and Psalms which issue from a particular period or from special circumstances may conceivably merit a class of their own, as for example, the Royal Psalms, which refer to the king and the kingdom of pre-Exilic days.

In the Hebrew text, the majority of Psalms have some form of title prefixed, which refers to the author, the collector, or perhaps to some circumstance which occasioned the writing of the Psalm. Unfortunately, many of the allusions to authorship and occasion of writing are obscure, and other expressions which occur in these titles are equally uncertain as to their proper meaning. It is partly for this reason that all Psalm titles have been omitted in the present translation. Some of these expressions may possibly refer to musical instruments or tunes, while others appear to indicate the collection to which the particular Psalm belonged

before the Psalter as a whole was formed. Whatever their origin, their true meaning has been lost with the passage of time and it is very doubtful if we shall ever know what they actually signified.

With regard to the manner in which the Psalter reached its present form we have again to confess a large measure of ignorance. As it stands in the Hebrew text, it is divided into five books, each of which closes on a note of thanksgiving, with the last Psalm forming a doxology to the entire collection. Exactly what prompted the five-fold division is rather hard to determine, and some scholars have suggested that it is an artificial pattern, based on the division of the Mosaic Law into the five books of the Pentateuch. No doubt collections of the Psalms were made as the compositions increased in number, and it seems probable that David and Solomon would have their own collections. Others were no doubt acquired for the Temple archives, and the stimulus which the Exile provided towards the rejuvenation of religion probably had practical expression in terms of further poetic compositions and increased scribal attention to the augmenting of existing collections.

If there was any order or sequence in the original groups of Psalms, it is not easy to discern to any extent in the Psalter as it has come down to us. Apart from Psalms which are grouped in terms of identical titles, as for example, the Psalms of David, we do not often find Psalms of similar character or content actually occurring side by side in the text. Compositions of varying antiquity occur together in happy disregard of our more modern systems of careful classification, and this type of intermingling poses problems for us when we attempt to discover the approximate date of individual Psalms.

Because so many of these writings are timeless in their appeal and reflect circumstances which are common to every age, the question of dating has of necessity to assume very general proportions, and only on comparatively rare occa-

sions are we able to say that a particular Psalm was written at a precise point in Hebrew history, as for example, with a Psalm which speaks of conditions existing in the early Exilic period. But even in such a case, it is probably the safest procedure simply to assign a composition to a period, rather than attempt to restrict its date to a particular decade, for in the nature of the case precise dating is precluded.

It was once thought that very few of the Psalms were pre-Exilic in date, but the discovery of Ugaritic literature has shown that analagous Hebrew compositions of a similar date are no longer to be considered as beyond the bounds of possibility. The existence of parallel phraseology in Ugaritic and Hebrew poetry may indicate that many of the Psalms which reflect Ugaritic usage are in fact pre-Exilic.

Psalms which were held to be comparatively early in date were thought to reflect crude theological concepts which tended to represent God in human terms, subject to similar emotions, and moved by analagous standards of value. But as the present version shows, such Psalms are frequently capable of being rendered into more refined concepts, without having to resort to the device of modern idiomatic expression. Appeals to anthropomorphisms, as they are called, are unreliable for purposes of dating, since the human mind is continually resorting to such expedients in order to convey something of the idea of Divine activity to the finite understanding.

While there is a considerable divergence of opinion among scholars on the question of the extreme dates between which the Psalms were written, it is probably quite fair to all concerned to say that the tendency in dating is to assign individual Psalms to a rather earlier period than would have been the case forty or fifty years ago. The earliest Psalms seem to be products of the days of David and Solomon, while the latest compositions to be written doubtless emerged from the time of Alexander the Great (336-323 B.C.). The present writer is very doubtful as to whether any Psalms were

composed during the Maccabean period in the second century before Christ. Psalms which speak of "wisdom," and which hint either at national atheism or disregard of the Law, are thought to be products of the Greek period. On the other hand, those compositions which regard the kingdom as a contemporary factor are in the main pre-Exilic. Psalms which deal with the problem of suffering on the part of the righteous, or issues connected with devotion to the Jewish Law, are generally post-Exilic.

The doctrines which are enshrined in the Psalms are those which are also common to the prophetic tradition of the Old Testament. God is revealed as the One Eternal Being who manifests specific attributes of character which He desires to be evident in the lives of those who claim to be His people. These qualities are constantly in the minds of the writers, with the result that frequent appeals are made to the holiness, righteousness, equity and faithfulness of the Divine nature.

We see, too, something of the breadth of vision of Hebrew prophecy, which could envisage all nations as ultimately worshiping the God of the Israelites. At the same time, as though to offset this noble concept, there is evidence of the narrower, more parochial ecclesiastical spirit, which thought of Israel's way as the only correct one, and which required any who professed interest in the worship of Jehovah to conform strictly to the patterns of Israelitish worship and belief before they could gain any recognition. There appears to have been some insistence on the separateness of Israelitish religion which would make it far from easy for the heathen to become true worshipers of Jehovah unless they abandoned entirely their ancestral forms of worship and submerged their prejudices and opinions in their espousal of Israelite religion.

The view which the Psalms take of man once more reinforces the traditional prophetic doctrines of his unworthiness when compared with Deity. Man is sinful by nature, and

needs the assurance of Divine forgiveness before he can derive the fullest benefit from observance of the ethical precepts of Jehovah. Once he makes these teachings his rule for behavior, he is regarded as righteous, in terms of his spiritual relationship with God. The concept of the Covenant is prominent, both as a challenge to Israel to keep her part of the agreement entered into at Mount Sinai, and also as an encouragement to believe that in so doing Israel would be honored and prospered for her fidelity.

As might be expected, the problems associated with the suffering of the righteous in life, and the prosperity of the wicked, come in for repeated consideration. In general, the writers concede that it is part of the order of things for the wicked to have some prosperity, and that the real sin lies in misusing this prosperity and adopting an attitude of pride and haughtiness towards others whom they may feel able to oppress as a consequence of their superior material position. But at the time when they imagine themselves to be most secure their stability is overthrown, for God intervenes and terminates their existence abruptly.

It is in this area of thought concerning the wicked, extended as it was to include any who were opposed to the beliefs and customs of the Israelites, that we find something of the vindictive spirit which so often underlay the feelings of the Hebrews towards their rivals or enemies. There is a noticeable lack of charity towards those who acted and believed differently from the accepted pattern of Israelite thought. When speaking of national or personal enemies, the Psalmist is often moved to express himself in terms of violence and abuse, with the aim of bringing down divine wrath upon the enemy.

It may be possible to explain this attitude on the part of Israel by recognizing that they had suffered much hardship from pagan nations throughout their history, and that the adoption of heathen religious forms from the days of Joshua had in the end brought upon them the punishment of the

Exile. In consequence, pagan nations were thought of as synonymous with idolatry, which after the Exile became increasingly alien to the true genius of the Hebrew people, and it would appear that the Psalmist took advantage of every opportunity to denounce the beliefs and practices of any who did not live according to the tenets of Israelite religion. This, it could be argued, was done not so much with the aim of condemning the races or peoples as such but rather using them as an example to the Israelites of what idolatrous religious customs could accomplish in the matter of moral and spiritual degradation. By contrast with such races, the righteous participators in the Covenant thought of themselves as the "poor," the "humble" and the "oppressed," while all others, whether maliciously disposed to them or not, were the "wicked" and the "evildoers."

But apart from purely personal and national elements, which have colored the literary expressions of all ages, the Hebrew Psalms present us with a picture of the nature of Jehovah, and of its revelation through the medium of the nation of Israel, which is sublime in its beauty and dynamic in its expression. We see the loving concern which Jehovah has for all His creation, and His consistent desire to win the sinner back to fellowship with Himself. His grandeur is expressed in majestic phrases reminiscent of the Canaanite writings, while His dealings with those who are faithful to the provisions of the Covenant are depicted in the most tender and beautiful terms.

In the last analysis, it is in the personal relationship between God and man, as expressed in the thought and experience of these ancient Hebrew writers, that we begin to see the religion of Jehovah as something intensely real and practical, touching each aspect of everyday living, and by its proximity enriching and ennobling the short span of human life. It is because of this that men through the ages have found the answer to some of their deepest needs by re-living the experiences of the Psalmist and discovering in this

approach to problems, material and spiritual alike, something of the inner peace which comes to those who find the highest expression of their personality in the performance of the Divine will.

The Psalms for Today

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Psalm 1

1 The man is happy who does not follow the advice of the wicked;
who does not loiter in the way taken by sinners,
nor resides in the dwelling of the disdainful.
2 But whose greatest pleasure is in the law of the Lord,
so that day and night he recites this law to himself.
3 He is like a tree planted beside streams of water,
which in its season produces its fruit,
and whose foliage does not wither.
4 That is not the case with the wicked,
for they are like the chaff blown away by the wind.
5 So then the wicked will have no permanent status
when judgment is meted out:
there will be no sinners where the righteous assemble.
6 For the Lord recognizes virtuous behavior,
but that of the ungodly will end in their downfall.

Psalm 2

1 What causes this tumult of nations,
with people vainly agitating?
2 Earthly monarchs set themselves up,
and the rulers plot together against the Lord,
and against His Anointed:
3 "We will tear apart their fetters,
and fling off their restraints."
4 He who is enthroned in heaven laughs;
the Lord derides them.
5 He proceeds to address them in His anger,
and terrify them in His fury, saying,
6 "As far as I am concerned,
I have anointed My King on Zion, my holy mountain."
7 I will recount the decree of the Lord, who said to Me,
"You are My Son, I have procreated You today.
8 "Petition Me, and I will bestow nations as Your heritage,
and the remote places of the earth for Your property.
9 "You will shatter them with an iron shaft;
and toss them aside like potters' earthenware."

10 Be warned in consequence, you who are kings;
follow this advice, those of you who rule on earth:
11 Serve the Lord with fear,
and shout joyfully with trembling.
12 Bow to the ground before Him
lest He become angry and you perish through your indiscretions,
for His displeasure is quickly provoked.
Happy are all who find shelter in Him.

Psalm 3

1 How my opponents have increased, Lord;
there are many rising to challenge me.
2 People without number are saying of me,
"God can do nothing to help him."
3 But You, Lord, are my complete protection,
my glory, my sustainer.
4 When I cry loudly to the Lord,
He answers me from His holy mountain.
5 I lie down and sleep;
again, I awake, for the Lord upholds me.
6 I do not fear the myriads of people
who have resisted me from all sides.
7 Arise, Lord; save me, my God.
Deal my enemies a decisive blow,
and destroy the rapacious evildoer.
8 Deliverance comes from the Lord;
Your blessing is bestowed upon Your people.

Psalm 4

1 My righteous God, answer me when I call.
You have opened a way for me in adversity;
be kind to me and hear my prayer.
2 How long, mortal men, shall my honor be defamed?
You love vain things and pursue falsehood.
3 But you will learn
that the Lord has set apart for Himself those who are godly.
When I entreat Him, the Lord will hear.

4 Let this challenge you, and stop sinning;
ponder it in your minds at night, and be silent.
5 Offer genuine sacrifices,
and trust in the Lord.
6 Many people are enquiring,
"Who is there that can show us anything good?"
Bestow Your good will upon us, Lord.
7 You have brought me greater happiness
than was theirs when the grain and wine were plentiful.
8 I will both recline and slumber in peace,
for You, Lord, alone afford me a secure existence.

Psalm 5

1 Listen, Lord, to my words;
take notice of my earnest heart-searching.
2 Pay attention to my loud cry, my King and my God,
for it is to You that I am appealing.
3 You heard my voice at dawn;
in the morning I prepare for You and expect You.
4 For You are not the kind of god who delights in wickedness;
evil has no place in Your activities.
5 Arrogant men do not stand confidently before You,
for You hate those who behave wickedly.
6 You destroy those who tell lies;
You, Lord, detest bloodthirsty and deceitful men.
7 But through Your abundant mercy I can enter Your abode,
and bow in reverence towards Your holy shrine.
8 Guide me by Your righteousness, Lord,
on account of my enemies.
9 For there is nothing reliable in what they say;
their motives are destruction:
their throat is like an open grave;
they flatter when they speak.
10 Usher in the consequences of their guilt, Lord;
let them fall foul of their own schemes.
Banish them for their repeated transgressions,
for they have rebelled against You.

11 May all those who come to You for shelter be happy;
may they continually sing for joy.
Protect them,
that those who cherish Your name may rejoice in You.
12 You will bless the godly man, Lord:
You will protect him and shield him.

Psalm 6

1 Do not punish me, Lord, in Your anger;
do not chastise me in Your displeasure.
2 Show me sympathy, Lord, for I am withering away;
cure me, Lord, for my bones are racked with terror.
3 I am greatly distraught.
Why do You linger so, Lord?
4 Change Your attitude and rescue me, Lord,
save me in Your loving compassion.
5 In death no one can keep You in mind.
Who can praise You in the realm of the dead?
6 I am worn out with sighing;
all night I soak my bed and drench my couch with my tears.
7 My eyes are failing through grief;
my sight has dimmed because of all my rivals.
8 Go away from me, all you evildoers,
for the Lord has heard my loud weeping.
9 The Lord has listened to my entreaty,
the Lord has accepted my prayer.
10 My enemies will all burn with shame, and be horrified;
once again they will experience sudden humiliation.

Psalm 7

1 Lord God, I have faith in You;
rescue me and deliver me from my persecutors,
2 Lest like a lion they tear me in pieces and rend me,
with no one near to free me.
3 Lord God, if my life has been of such an order
that injustice has resulted from my actions;
4 if I have repaid my friends with evil,
or caused my opponents needless loss,

5 may the enemy hunt me down until he overtakes me:
may he trample my very life to the ground,
and hurl my honor to the dust.
6 Arise, Lord, in Your displeasure;
stir up opposition to my violent enemies.
Wake up; demand justice for me.
7 Surround Yourself with the assembled peoples;
preside over them from the regions above.
8 The Lord will plead my cause with the people.
Give judgment, Lord, according to my integrity and
my upright character.
9 Let the evil done by the wicked be finished, I pray;
establish the righteous firmly, God of equity,
by discerning the minds and innermost thoughts of man.
10 I make my request unto God,
who assists the right-minded.
11 God is an equitable judge,
a God who is daily pronouncing sentence.
12 If they do not repent He will sharpen His sword;
He has bent His bow and taken aim.
13 His deadly weapons are ready;
He makes his arrows shafts of fire.
14 See how the wicked man travails with iniquity
and is pregnant with malice,
bringing forth falsehood.
15 He digs a hole and excavates it;
he falls into the very hollow that he has made.
16 His malice rebounds on his own head;
his violence descends on himself alone.
17 I will commend the Lord for His justice;
I will sing praise to the name of the Lord Most High.

Psalm 8

1 Lord God, how renowned is Your name in all the earth,
for You have established Your majesty in the heavens.
2 In the cries of infants and babies You have founded ascriptions
of praise, on account of Your enemies;
to obstruct the foe, and the one who is bent on vengeance.

3 When I contemplate Your handiwork in the skies,
the moon and the stars which You have set in position,
4 what is man, that You remember him,
and mortal man, that You concern Yourself about him?
5 In comparison with Deity You made him inferior,
yet graced him with glory and dignity.
6 You gave him authority over Your creation,
making everything subservient to him.
7 Flocks of sheep, herds of oxen, all of them;
the wild beasts as well.
8 Birds of the air and fish of the sea;
whatever traverses the paths of the ocean,
9 Lord God,
how renowned is Your name throughout the earth.

Psalm 9

1 I am praising You, Lord, with my whole being;
I am telling of all Your marvelous works.
2 I am happy and jubilant because of You,
loudly proclaiming Your name, Most High.
3 For my enemies have been routed;
they wavered and fell before You.
4 You have upheld my just claim,
occupying the seat of a righteous judge.
5 You have reprimanded pagan nations and dispersed the wicked,
obliterating their name for ever.
6 My enemies have been consumed in utter ruin:
You have devastated their cities,
their very memory has disappeared.
7 But the Lord is enthroned for ever;
He has established His seat for government.
8 He will judge mankind with equity,
and will impose just punishments on the peoples.
9 The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed;
a safe retreat in times of emergency.
10 Those who have faith in You
are the ones who recognize Your power,
because You do not neglect those who are searching for You, Lord.

11 Proclaim the praises of the Lord, who dwells in Zion;
tell of His doings among the nations.
12 For the avenger of death bears them in mind:
He does not ignore the appealing cry of the oppressed.
13 Be kind to me, Lord:
see what I endure from those who despise me,
for You have drawn me away from the brink of death,
14 in order that I may relate all Your praises,
and be jubilant about Your liberation in the gates of the city of Zion.
15 The nations have become engulfed in the hole which they dug;
their own foot has been snared in the net which they fixed secretly.
16 The Lord has manifested Himself by executing judgment;
the wicked are trapped by their own schemes.
17 May the iniquitous return to the realms of the dead,
with all the nations who disregard God.
18 For the oppressed shall not be forgotten entirely;
the expectation of the afflicted shall not be deferred indefinitely.
19 Arise, Lord,
do not allow mortal man to triumph;
may the peoples be judged according to Your purpose.
20 Put Your terror into them, Lord;
let the pagans know that they are only mortal.

Psalm 10

1 Why do You remain aloof, Lord,
and conceal Yourself in times of emergency?
2 The helpless are hotly pursued by arrogant evildoers:
let them be snared by the schemes which they have hatched.
3 For the wicked man glories in his covetous desires;
the defrauder reviles and rejects the Lord.
4 The wrongdoer, being insolent in behavior, makes no request of Him;
his whole thought is, "There is no God."
5 His affairs progress smoothly at all times;
Your decrees are completely above and beyond him.
He disdains all his opponents.

6 He says to himself,
"I shall never be disturbed;
I shall experience no hardship, whatever may happen."
7 His speech is full of deceit and oppression;
mischief and iniquity lurk in his remarks.
8 He lies in ambush in the villages;
from a concealed place he ravages the innocent.
His eyes are on the lookout for the unfortunate.
9 Like a lion in his lair he lurks in his dwelling;
he lies in wait to rob the defenseless,
and plunders him when he draws him into his trap.
10 The victim is crushed,
he sinks down and succumbs to his superior strength.
11 He says to himself,
"God has overlooked it; He has hidden away,
and will not notice it at all."
12 Rise up, Lord;
manifest Your power, my God.
Do not neglect the oppressed.
13 Why has the wicked man repudiated God, saying to himself,
"You will not require an account to be rendered."
14 However, You have noticed it:
You have observed this trouble and sadness,
You will take matters in hand.
The afflicted trusts himself to You,
for You are the friend of the orphan.
15 Break the power of the guilty and wicked;
punish his iniquity till You have completely obliterated it.
16 The Lord is King eternally;
the heathen will perish from His land.
17 You have acceded to the wishes of the humble, Lord;
You will sustain them, and pay careful attention to them,
18 in order to do justice to the orphan and poor,
that earthly mortals may never again affright.

Psalm 11

1 I have placed my faith in the Lord; how then can you tell me,
"Take to flight like a bird, to your mountain home."

2 See how the wicked are bending their bow;
they have fitted their arrows to the bowstring,
to shoot from ambush at the right-minded.
3 For when the foundations are broken down,
what can the righteous man accomplish?
4 The Lord is in His holy shrine;
the Lord is enthroned in the heavens.
He observes and surveys all mankind.
5 The Lord scrutinizes the virtuous and wicked alike,
and He detests the men who love violence.
6 He will shower blazing embers and sulphur on evildoers;
a furious storm will mark their end.
7 The Lord is essentially righteous, and loves justice.
For this reason the upright will finally see Him.

Psalm 12

1 Intervene, Lord, for virtue has vanished;
there is no more fidelity among mankind.
2 Everyone tells lies to his neighbor;
their speech is flattering, their mind deceitful.
3 May the Lord silence beguiling lips,
and the tongue that boasts of great exploits.
4 The people who say,
"We will become great through argument;
our words are our confederates,
who is our superior?"
5 "The oppressed are exploited, the poor are sighing:
therefore I will arise at once," says the Lord,
"and I will release him whom they disdain."
6 The utterances of the Lord are absolutely true;
as sterling silver smelted in a furnace,
refined seven times.
7 You will protect them, Lord,
You will preserve us from this generation for ever.
8 The wicked parade about
when vileness is exalted among humanity.

Psalm 13

1 How long, Lord —
will You be for ever ignoring me?
How long will You conceal Yourself from me?"
2 "How long must I keep my worries to myself,
and carry grief in my mind daily?
How long are my enemies to be my superiors?"
3 "Take notice of me and answer me, my Lord God;
refresh me, otherwise I shall die.
4 Then my enemy will boast,
"I have overcome him,"
and my opponents will rejoice at my collapse.
5 I have complete faith in Your loving mercy;
I shall be glad of Your help."
6 I will sing praises to the Lord,
because He has been kind to me.

Psalm 14

1 Profane men say to themselves, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, and perpetuate abominable deeds;
not one of them does good.
2 From the heavens the Lord surveys humanity,
to see if any are sufficiently discerning
to search for God.
3 They are all apostate;
to a man they have become corrupt.
None of them does good, not a single one.
4 Are those miscreants devoid of sense,
devouring God's people like bread,
without consideration for the Lord?
5 In that very situation they became desperately alarmed,
because God appeared on the side of the righteous.
6 Though one might thwart the plans of the poor,
the Lord is their refuge,
7 who bestows deliverance upon Israel from Zion.
When the Lord reverses the fortunes of His people,
Jacob will be jubilant; Israel will be joyful.

Psalm 15

1 "Who shall lodge in Your dwelling, Lord?
Who shall reside on Your holy hill?
2 "The man of impeccable character,
who acts out of fairness,
and speaks the truth confidently;
3 "whose talk contains no calumny,
who neither harms his friend nor reproaches his neighbor.
4 "A man in whose eyes the reprobate is despicable,
yet one who honors those who revere the Lord.
One who will keep a promise, even to his own detriment,
and will not retract.
5 "A person who does not lend out money at interest,
and does not take a bribe against the innocent.
The man who behaves like this will remain undisturbed."

Psalm 16

1 Safeguard me, my God,
for I have placed my faith in You.
2 I have said to the Lord,
"My Lord, my wellbeing depends entirely on You;
apart from You I have no future."
3 The saints who are on earth
are indeed illustrious;
I admire them greatly.
4 Under any other god their sorrows would multiply and accumulate quickly.
I will never pour out their libations of blood,
nor will I at any time mention their names.
5 The Lord is my allotted part, my share and my fate;
You are the Master of my destiny.
6 I have been given a prosperous inheritance;
my assigned portion is indeed pleasant to me.
7 I will bless the Lord for His counsel;
even for the nights when my conscience rebuked me.
8 I have kept the Lord in mind continually;
with Him beside me I cannot be disturbed.

9 So then I am happy;
I am rejoicing openly.
I am living in security.
10 For You will not dismiss me to the realm of death;
You will not let Your loyal servant see the grave.
11 You will show me the way which leads to life:
with You there is abundant joy;
enjoyable things result continually from Your generosity.

Psalm 17

1 Listen, Lord, to a just claim; pay attention to my loud cry.
Hear my prayer, for it does not proceed from deceitful lips.
2 Pass sentence upon me now,
for You will see that justice is done.
3 You have examined my motives, You have tried me secretly
and have tested me severely,
without discovering any improper conduct:
I do not even give offense in speech as worldly men do.
4 Through Your solemn decrees
I have avoided lawless behavior.
5 My steps have followed Your paths;
my feet have not faltered.
6 Therefore I entreat You, for You will answer me, my God;
give me audience, hear what I have to say.
7 Show Your compassionate love
by rescuing those who look to Your power
for liberation from their enemies.
8 Protect me like the delicate pupil of the eye,
shelter me within Your shielding power
9 from the attention of plundering wrongdoers,
my desperate enemies who hem me in.
10 They have closed their minds to pity,
their speech is haughty.
11 I perceive them at this moment —
they are peering around and have taken up positions
ready to hurl me to the ground,
12 exactly like a lion longing to tear in pieces:
like a lion cub lurking in concealment.

13 Arise, Lord: confront them and overpower them.
Rescue me from the wicked by Your strength,
14 and by Your might, Lord, from men —
mortals whose lot in life is worldliness;
their stomach filled with Your good things,
their offspring satiated.
They leave what remains for their young.
15 Through honest behavior I shall see Your presence;
I shall be satisfied when Your form becomes real.

Psalm 18

1 My mighty God, I am devoted to You.
2 The Lord is my firm foundation, my fort and my liberator;
my God, my trustworthy defense,
my protector, my strong deliverer and my place of retreat.
3 I will petition the Lord, for He is praiseworthy,
that I may be rid of my enemies.
4 The travail of death swept over me.
torrents of destruction flooded upon me.
5 The clutches of the grave laid hold of me;
the snares of death twined around me.
6 In my despair I called to the Lord,
and shouted for help to my God.
He heard my entreaty from His heavenly shrine,
and my cry to Him attracted His attention.
7 Then the earth trembled and quaked;
the hills shook to their foundations
and rocked at His anger.
8 His fury mounted visibly, and fire from His presence raged;
blazing embers flashed out from it.
9 He straddled the sky and came down;
intense darkness formed under Him.
10 He rode on a flying cherub,
He soared on wings of wind.
11 He shrouded Himself with darkness as His covering;
the recesses of the clouds, black with water, concealed Him.
12 From the brightness before Him
the clouds poured out hail and blazing embers,

13 and from heaven the Lord thundered;
the Most High roared out with hail and blazing embers.
14 He discharged lightning and dispersed them;
He hurled down great thunderbolts and routed them.
15 The bed of the sea became visible;
the foundations of the earth were uncovered
at Your rebuke, Lord,
at the fierce blast of Your anger.
16 He reached down from above and took me:
He drew me up from the raging waters.
17 He rescued me from my powerful enemy,
and from those who hated me,
because they were superior to me.
18 When calamity overtook me they set upon me,
but the Lord was my support.
19 He led me out to a spacious place:
He released me out of affection for me.
20 The Lord repaid me for my virtue;
He rewarded me for my upright conduct.
21 For I have observed the requirements of the Lord,
and I have not strayed wantonly from my God.
22 For I kept all His decrees in my mind,
and did not reject His precepts.
23 I have lived morally before Him,
and guarded myself against sin.
24 Thus the Lord repaid me for my virtuous conduct,
and for my irreproachable behavior.
25 To the loyal You show Yourself full of love,
manifesting Your integrity to the upright.
26 You behave fairly toward the pure,
but to the crafty You show Yourself perverse.
27 For You will set free an afflicted people,
but will humble the haughty manner.
28 For You are the One who increases my prosperity;
the Lord my God lights up the darkness around me.
29 Through You I can pursue a raiding-party,
and by my God I can scale a wall.

30 The divine plan is perfect;
the promise of the Lord is assured.
He provides a refuge for all who would shelter in Him.
31 For who is God except the Lord?
And who is a secure foundation apart from our God?
32 — the God who invests me with strength,
and makes my progress easy.
33 He will make my feet like those of a doe:
on lofty places He will give me firm footing.
34 He will accustom my hands to fighting,
so that my arms can bend a bronze bow.
35 You have afforded me Your saving protection,
and Your might sustains me;
Your solicitude has made me great.
36 You have enlarged the scope of my activities,
and I do not become fatigued.
37 I will pursue my enemies and overtake them;
nor will I withdraw until they are completely destroyed.
38 I will wound them, and they shall not be able to rise;
they will fall beneath my feet.
39 You will give me strength for the conflict;
You will make my opponents subservient to me.
40 You put my enemies to flight,
and I kill those who hate me.
41 They cry out,
but there is no one to rescue them;
they appeal to the Lord,
but He does not answer them.
42 I will pound them to pieces,
so that they are like dust blown away by the wind;
I will stamp them down like the mud of the lanes.
43 You are the one to rescue me from the onslaught of the heathen;
You establish me as victor over the nations.
People whom I do not know are my vassals.
44 Immediately they hear me, they obey me;
foreigners cower before me.
45 Aliens languish,
and steal from their fortresses trembling.

46 The Lord lives; praised be my sure foundation.
May my liberating God be elevated —
47 the God who exacts retribution for me,
and makes nations subject to me,
48 rescuing me from my foes.
You exalt me indeed above my enemies,
and liberate me from tyrants.
49 So then I will glorify You, Lord, among the nations,
and loudly proclaim Your name.
50 He bestows glorious conquests on His king,
showing generous favor to His anointed,
to David and his descendants for ever.

Psalm 19

1 The heavens are recounting the glory of God;
the vault of the sky proclaims what He has done.
2 Day after day they speak,
and night after night reveal knowledge.
3 There is no speech, nor words
where their voice is not heard.
4 Their range extends throughout the earth,
and their message to the ends of the world.
He has made among them a dwelling for the sun:
5 Like a radiant bridegroom it arises from its covering horizon,
and is jubilant like a warrior, in running its course.
6 From one end of the sky it arises
and moves around to the other;
nothing is concealed from its heat.
7 The law of the Lord is perfect,
promoting spiritual vigor.
The decrees of the Lord are reliable,
making the ignorant wise.
8 The teachings of the Lord are true,
making one happy.
The commandment of the Lord is intelligible,
enlightening the mind.
9 Reverence for the Lord is a pure and lasting way of life;
the ordinances of the Lord are genuine and perfectly just.

10 They are more desirable than gold,
than refined gold in quantity:
and sweeter than honey,
even when dripping from the honeycomb.
11 By them Your servant is instructed;
there is a rich reward in keeping them.
12 Who can discern errors?
Cleanse me from inadvertent sins.
13 Restrain Your servant especially from wilful wrongdoing;
may such never again gain control over me.
Then I shall be virtuous, and acquitted of much sin.
14 May my speech,
and the thoughts in my mind
be acceptable to You, Lord, my powerful protector.

Psalm 20

1 May the Lord answer you in times of calamity;
may the God of Jacob defend you.
2 May He send you help from His shrine,
and give you assistance from Zion.
3 May He remember all your offerings,
and accept your sacrifices graciously.
4 May He be indulgent to your requests,
and grant you all your wishes,
5 so that we can rejoice at your success,
and hoist our banners in the name of our God.
May the Lord fulfil all your resolves.
6 Even now I am assured that the Lord will give His anointed victory;
that He will answer him from His sacred abode with a
powerful display of saving strength.
7 Some have great resources of chariots, others of horses;
but for our part we will invoke the name of the Lord our God.
8 They will falter and collapse,
but we shall arise and stand erect.
9 Give the king victory, Lord;
answer us when we entreat You.

Psalm 21

1 The king will be happy because of Your might, Lord;
how greatly will he rejoice in Your assistance.
2 You have acceded to his dearest wishes,
and have not denied his request.
3 For You precede him with abundant blessings,
placing on his head a crown of pure gold.
4 He asked life of You;
You bestowed it on him — long life, for eternity.
5 His fame is great because of Your help;
You confer honor and majesty upon him.
6 For You make him blessed indeed for ever;
You gladden him by Your radiant presence.
7 The king places his trust in the Lord,
and through the loving favor of the Most High
he shall not be overthrown.
8 You will uncover all Your enemies;
Your great power will ferret out those who hate You.
9 You will consign them to fiery destruction
according to Your purpose, Lord.
(May His anger destroy them, and may fire devour them.)
10 You will wipe out their offspring from the earth,
and their descendants from among human society.
11 For when they plan evil against You
and hatch crafty schemes,
they shall not succeed,
12 because You will disperse them;
You will take aim at them with Your weapons.
13 Arise, Lord, in Your might,
that we may sing and praise Your power.

Psalm 22

1 My God, my God, why have You abandoned me?
Why are You so far from helping me in my anguished groaning?
2 I entreat You by day, my God, but You do not answer;
and at night, but I obtain no rest.
3 Nevertheless You are enthroned as the Holy One,
the praise of Israel.

4 Our forebears put their trust in You;
they believed, and You delivered them.
5 To You they appealed, and were rescued;
they had faith in You, and were not disappointed.
6 For my part I am a worm, and not a human being;
insulted by men, despised by society.
7 All who notice me jeer at me;
they gape at me and shake their heads:
8 "There is a man who committed himself to the Lord,
hoping that He would deliver him;
let Him rescue him,
if He is at all concerned about him."
9 Nevertheless, it was You who delivered me from the womb;
You made me feel secure at my mother's breast.
10 I was thrown on Your care from birth;
from my conception You have been my God.
11 Do not withdraw from me, for distress looms large,
and there is no assistance at hand.
12 I am encircled by prancing bulls;
the belligerent from Bashan hem me in.
13 They have opened their mouths at me
like a voracious, roaring lion.
14 My energy drains away from me like water,
and all my bones are dislocated;
my heart is like wax, melted within my breast.
15 My strength is dried up like baked earthenware,
and my tongue sticks to my palate;
You are laying me in my last resting-place.
16 A pack of dogs surrounds me,
a mob of ruffians encircles me;
like a lion they mangle my hands and feet,
17 I can count every one of my bones.
They look at me, gloating over me;
18 They divide my clothes among themselves,
and for my cloak they hold a lottery.
19 Do not remain aloof, Lord;
hurry to my assistance, for You are my sustainer.
20 Deliver me from the sword;
save my solitary soul from these powerful beasts.

21 Rescue me from the jaws of the lion,
and from the horns of the wild oxen.
22 You have answered me;
I will tell my brothers of Your power,
and sing Your praises in the great assembly:
23 "Praise Him, you who revere the Lord;
glorify Him, you offspring of Jacob;
stand in awe of Him, you children of Israel.
24 "For He neither spurned nor loathed the afflictions of the oppressed,
nor has He concealed His presence from them,
but has listened when they appealed to Him for help."
25 I will praise You in the assembly;
I will discharge my vows in the presence of His worshippers.
26 The lowly shall eat and be satisfied;
those who seek the Lord shall praise Him.
May you live for ever.
27 The extremities of the earth will bear it in mind, and turn to the Lord;
the entire human family will worship in His presence.
28 For the dominion belongs to the Lord,
and He rules over the nations.
29 Prosperous men have become sated and corrupt;
yet all who are dying shall acknowledge His supremacy,
for no one preserves his soul alive.
30 Posterity will serve Him,
and tell of the Lord to future generations;
31 they will proclaim His righteousness to a people yet unborn,
because He has accomplished this matter.

Psalm 23

1 The Lord shepherds me,
I shall never be in need.
2 In green meadows He finds me a resting-place;
He leads me to refreshing waters.
3 He gives me renewed life,
He guides me along a virtuous course
in accordance with His nature.

4 Even though I have to cross the darkest valley
I will not be afraid of any harm,
for You are with me:
Your strength and support are indeed my comfort.
5 You prepare food for me, while my enemies look on;
You anoint my head with oil,
my fortunes prosper greatly.
6 Goodness and love alone will accompany me through life,
and I shall live in the house of the Lord all my days.

Psalm 24

1 The earth belongs to the Lord, and everything that fills it:
the world, and its inhabitants.
2 For He has founded it upon the oceans,
and established it upon sea-currents.
3 Who may ascend the Lord's hill?
Who may stand in His shrine?
4 The man of impeccable behavior and pure motives,
who does not entertain falsehood in his mind,
nor swears solemnly with intent to deceive.
5 He will receive blessing from the Lord,
and justification from God his deliverer.
6 Of such a kind are those who resort to Him,
looking for the presence of Jacob's God.
7 Lift up you lintels, you gates,
open wide, you ancient doors,
that the glorious King may enter.
8 Who is this glorious King?
He is the Lord, strong and powerful,
the Lord, mighty in battle.
9 Lift up your lintels, you gates,
open wide, you ancient doors,
that the glorious King may enter.
10 Who is this glorious King?
It is the Lord, the God of armies;
He is the glorious King.

Psalm 25

1 I have set my mind upon You, Lord.
2 I have put my trust in You, my God.
do not let me be disappointed:
do not allow my rivals to triumph over me.
3 Surely no one who trusts in You will be disgraced.
May those who behave deceitfully for no reason be humiliated.
4 Make known Your plans to me, Lord;
inform me of Your intentions.
5 Guide me by Your truth and instruct me,
for You are my saving God
in whom I trust continually.
6 Remember Your sympathy and mercy, Lord,
for they are eternal.
7 Do not recall my youthful sins and offences,
but think of me in terms of Your unfailing love,
because You are the essence of goodness.
8 The Lord is kind and virtuous;
consequently He shows sinners the right way to take.
9 He gives proper direction to the humble,
and reveals His plans to the lowly.
10 The Lord is the essence of mercy and truth
for those who observe His covenant and His decrees.
11 Because of what You are, Lord,
pardon my sin, despite its extent.
12 Who is the man that reveres the Lord?
He will point out to him the direction which he should take.
13 His life will be spent in prosperity;
his descendants will inherit the land.
14 Intimate communion with the Lord
is the prerogative of those who revere Him;
to them only He reveals His covenant.
15 I am constantly looking toward the Lord,
for it is He who plucks my feet from the snare.
16 Turn to me, and show me Your favor,
for I am lonely and distressed.

17 Give me respite from trouble,
and rid me of my afflictions.
18 Take stock of my misery and wretchedness,
and forgive all my sins.
19 Observe how numerous my foes are,
and with what vehemence they hate me.
20 Protect me and rescue me;
do not let me be discredited,
for I have put my faith in You.
21 May innocence and virtue safeguard me,
for I have placed my trust in You.
22 Redeem Israel, Lord,
from all its troubles.

Psalm 26

1 Do what is right by me, Lord,
for I have conducted myself blamelessly;
and I have placed unswerving faith in the Lord.
2 Try me, Lord, and test me;
examine my motives and my mind.
3 For Your gracious love is at the forefront of my mind,
and I have lived by your principles of truth.
4 I never mix with deceitful people,
nor do I associate with hypocrites.
5 I detest the company of criminals,
and I refuse to mingle with the wicked.
6 I will perform a ritual ablution of purity,
and thus will proceed around your altar, Lord,
7 singing loud thanksgivings,
and recounting all your marvelous works.
8 I adore the shrine where You dwell, Lord,
and the place where Your glory resides.
9 May I never be carried off with sinful men,
nor taken away with murderers,
10 whose hands are soiled with villainy,
their right hands overflowing with bribes.
11 For my part I will continue in my integrity;
deliver me and act graciously towards me.

12 I am established on firm ground;
in the assembly I will bless the Lord.

Psalm 27

1 The Lord is my light and my salvation;
whom shall I fear?
The Lord is my refuge;
whom shall I dread?
2 When deadly enemies assailed me,
to devour me completely,
it was those very opponents and enemies of mine
who stumbled and fell.
3 Though an army should encamp against me,
I would be fearless in spirit;
though war were waged upon me,
still would I be confident.
4 One thing only I request of the Lord —
something which I earnestly desire —
that I may reside in the divine abode all my life;
to observe the grace of the Lord,
and contemplate His shrine with pleasure.
5 For in the time of my misfortune He will shelter me in His house;
He will hide me in His haven of refuge,
and establish me upon a firm foundation.
6 And now I am elevated above my foes who hem me in:
at this time I will offer joyous sacrifices in His shrine;
I will sing and proclaim the praises of the Lord.
7 Hear my voice, Lord, when I call:
be kind to me and answer me.
8 My mind counsels me concerning You,
"Search Me out."
I will search for You, Lord.
9 Do not conceal Yourself from me:
do not dismiss Your servant in anger
for You have been my help.
Do not cast me off or abandon me,
my redeeming God.

10 Even if my father and mother were to forsake me,
the Lord would adopt me.
11 Reveal Your designs to me, Lord,
and give me direct guidance on account of my enemies.
12 Do not abandon me to the schemes of my rivals,
for men of bad faith have risen against me,
fuming violently.
13 However, I am confident
that I shall see the goodness of the Lord
in this present life.
14 Put your faith in the Lord;
be courageous, let your morale be strengthened.
Trust in the Lord.

Psalm 28

1 I am calling to You, Lord;
do not be indifferent to me, my strong defense:
for if You pay no attention to me
I shall become like those who have been buried.
2 Hear my entreaty when I cry to You for help;
as I raise my hands to Your holy temple.
3 Do not snatch me away with the wicked,
with those who are lawbreakers;
who greet their neighbours pleasantly
while evil lurks in their minds.
4 Reward them according to their dealings and their wicked conduct.
Requite them for their doings;
recompense them with their just deserts.
5 For they have no respect for what the Lord has done,
nor for the manifestations of His power.
(May He demolish them: may He not establish them.)
6 May the Lord be praised
for listening to my imploring voice.
7 The Lord is my strength and my protection,
I am trusting in Him.
I have received help, and I am most grateful;
I will thank Him in song.

8 "The Lord is the strength of His people,
a safe refuge for His anointed.
9 Give Your people victory,
bless Your inheritance;
shepherd them and support them for ever."

Psalm 29

1 Ascribe to the Lord, you heavenly beings,
ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.
2 Ascribe to the Lord the renown due to him;
worship the Lord in seemly attire.
3 The Lord fulminates across the waters;
the glorious God is thundering.
The Lord roars out over the vast deeps.
4 The thunder of the Lord is resplendent with power;
the thunder of the Lord is majestic.
5 His thunder shatters the cedars;
the Lord uproots the cedars of Lebanon.
6 He makes Lebanon jump like a calf,
and Sirion like a young buffalo.
7 The thunder of the Lord
carves out tongues of flame;
8 the thunder of the Lord stirs up the desert.
The Lord makes the wilderness of Kadesh tremble.
9 The thunder of the Lord smashes down the oak trees,
and strips the forest bare;
while all in His temple chant "Glory."
10 The Lord dwells above the flood;
the Lord is enthroned as King for ever.
11 May the Lord strengthen His people:
may the Lord bless His people with peace.

Psalm 30

1 I will praise You, Lord
because You have elevated me,
and have prevented my enemies from rejoicing over me.
2 I cried loudly to You for help, my Lord God,
and You restored me.

3 You, Lord, have snatched me from death;
You have revived me, and have not allowed me to die.
4 Sing the praises of the Lord, you who are His saints,
and bless His Holy Name.
5 For though His anger is momentary,
His favor endures for a lifetime.
One may pass the night in weeping,
but shouts of joy come with the dawn.
6 When I was enjoying prosperity, I said,
"I shall never be dispossessed";
7 for You, Lord, had established me by Your favor
as it were on an impregnable mountain.
You concealed Yourself; I became alarmed.
8 I cried to You, Lord;
I appealed to the Lord,
9 "What will have been gained by my death when I am buried?
Can dust praise You? Can it witness to Your truth?"
10 Hear me, Lord, and show me Your favor;
come to my assistance, Lord.
11 You have transformed my mourning into dancing;
you have stripped off my sackcloth
and decked me with joy,
12 that I might sing Your praise, and not be silent;
Lord God, I will thank You eternally.

Psalm 31

1 I have put my trust in You, Lord;
do not let me be disappointed:
deliver me because of Your righteousness.
2 Pay attention to my needs, rescue me quickly;
be my sure protection, a stronghold for my safety.
3 For you are my defense and my fortress;
lead me and direct me in accordance with Your nature.
4 Draw me out of the snare which they have put down for me,
for You are my protector.
5 I commit my life into Your keeping;
You have ransomed me, Lord,
because You are a faithful God.

6 I detest those who pay court to vain idols;
my trust is in the Lord.
7 I will rejoice and be glad because of Your love,
for You have observed my misery;
You have noticed the affliction of my soul.
8 You have not surrendered me to the power of the foe,
but instead You have established me in ample surroundings.
9 Be gracious to me, Lord, for I am distressed;
my sight is failing through sorrow.
Soul and body are weakened.
10 For my life is consumed with grief
and my years with lamentation.
My strength is spent because of my adversity,
and my very bones are wasted away.
11 I have become the scorn of all my rivals,
and of my neighbors in particular.
I am an object of terror to my acquaintances:
those who see me out of doors run away from me.
12 I have disappeared from memory like one who is dead;
I have become like broken earthenware.
13 For I hear many slandering;
hostility surrounds me.
Every one of them plots against me,
scheming to take my life.
14 But I have complete confidence in You, Lord;
I have said, "You are my God."
15 My destiny is under Your control:
rescue me from the power of my pursuing enemies.
16 Let Your presence radiate around Your servant;
save me because of Your loving favor.
17 Do not let me be humiliated, Lord,
for I have entreated You.
Let the wicked be disgraced;
let them languish in the grave.
18 May lying lips be silenced
which speak contemptuously against the righteous,
with pride and scorn.

19 How abundant is the goodness
which You have stored up for Your worshippers;
providing for those among mankind who rely upon You.
20 You will protect them by Your presence from mortal scheming,
and hide them securely from quarrelling tongues.
21 May the Lord be blessed,
for He has shown me wonderful kindness
in a time of emergency.
22 For I had said in alarm,
"I am denied access to Your presence."
Nevertheless You heard my imploring voice
when I cried to You for help.
23 Give the Lord your devotion, you saints of His.
The Lord safeguards the faithful,
but fully recompenses arrogant behavior.
24 Be brave;
show a spirit of courage,
if you are trusting in the Lord.

Psalm 32

1 How happy is the one whose sin has been forgiven,
and whose iniquity is pardoned.
2 Happy indeed is the man
to whom the Lord doth not ascribe guilt,
and in whose mind there lurks no deceit.
3 For while I remained indifferent
my very bones wasted away,
because of my continual groaning.
4 For your punishment lay heavily upon me day and night;
my strength was sapped like moisture in summer heat.
5 Then I acknowledged my sin to You,
and did not conceal my guilt.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."
Then You forgave me my wicked sin.
6 For this reason may every godly man pray to You
when all goes well;
then when mighty waters would sweep him away,
they shall not reach him.

7 You are my haven of refuge,
preserving me in my peril,
and surrounding me with deliverance.
8 Let me instruct you,
and advise you as to the course which you should adopt;
let me counsel you wisely.
9 Do not behave like a horse or a mule,
neither of which possess understanding:
needing a bridle and bit to curb them.
and without which they will not approach you.
10 The torments of the wicked are many,
but he who trusts in the Lord is surrounded by His favor.
11 Rejoice in the Lord,
be jubilant, you righteous;
let the virtuous shout for joy.

Psalm 33

1 Rejoice in the Lord, you upright.
It is fitting for the virtuous to be joyful.
2 Sing praises to the Lord upon the harp;
proclaim His glory on a ten-stringed lute.
3 Sing a new song to Him;
play skillfully with shouts of joy.
4 For the promises of the Lord are reliable,
and all that He does is trustworthy.
5 He cherishes righteousness and justice;
the earth is full of divine blessing.
6 At the bidding of the Lord the heavens were formed,
and all their company at his decree.
7 He gathers together the seas as though in a water-bottle;
he confines the oceans to their basins.
8 Let all the earth fear the Lord;
let the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.
9 For He gave an order, and it was accomplished;
He issued a command, and it stood firm.
10 The Lord frustrates the schemes of pagan nations;
He annuls the designs of heathen peoples.
11 The purposes of the Lord stand for ever;
the thoughts of His mind are permanent.

12 The nation is happy indeed
whose God is the Lord,
the people whom He has selected as His inheritance.
13 The Lord surveys the scene from heaven;
He observes all human society.
14 From His dwelling-place
He looks out on all the inhabitants of the earth,
15 For He fashioned their minds;
so He takes notice of all their doings.
16 A king is not saved by the magnitude of his army;
a soldier is not delivered by his superior strength.
17 The war-horse is of no avail for victory,
nor does he deliver anyone by his great power.
18 Observe how the Lord
meets the needs of those who fear Him,
and trust in His loving favor
19 to deliver them from death,
and to keep them alive when famine comes.
20 We trust in the Lord,
for He is our help and protection.
21 In Him we rejoice;
we trust in His holy name.
22 May Your mercy rest upon us,
as long as ever we trust in You.

Psalm 34

1 I will bless the Lord at all times:
His praises shall be continually on my lips.
2 In the Lord I will glory;
let the humble hear and rejoice.
3 Magnify the Lord with me;
let us all proclaim His name.
4 I entreated the Lord, and He answered me,
delivering me from all my fears.
5 Look to Him, and beam with joy;
you will never feel shamefaced.
6 This poor man cried, and the Lord heard;
He rescued him from all his troubles.

7 The Angel of the Lord makes his abode
with those who revere Him, and liberates them.
8 Observe and see that the Lord is good.
Happy is the man who shelters in Him.
9 Fear the Lord, you who are His saints,
for those who revere Him know no scarcity.
10 The renegade may be in need, and go hungry;
but those who search for the Lord shall not be short of anything good.
11 Come children, listen to me;
I will inspire you with reverence for the Lord.
12 Which of you desires a good life,
wishing to live long and enjoy happiness?
13 In that case you must prevent your tongue from speaking evil,
and your lips from pronouncing deceit:
14 you must forsake evil and do good;
desire peace, and then safeguard it.
15 The attention of the Lord is focused on the virtuous:
He listens to their appeal.
16 But the Lord opposes those who do evil,
that He may eradicate their memory from the earth.
17 The virtuous make earnest request, and the Lord hears,
and delivers them from all their troubles.
18 The Lord is beside the broken-hearted,
and helps those who are crushed in spirit.
19 The righteous man has numerous afflictions,
yet the Lord sets him free from them all.
20 He protects every one of his bones,
so that none of them are broken.
21 Evil will cause the downfall of the wicked,
and those who hate the virtuous are doomed.
22 The Lord redeems the souls of His servants:
no one who shelters in Him will incur guilt.

Psalm 35

1 Stir up opposition to my rivals, Lord;
fight those who attack me.
2 Man the defenses, take precautionary measures;
come to my assistance.

3 Wield weapons of war,
and block the way against my pursuers.
Give me this assurance:
"I am your deliverance."
4 May those who wish to kill me be dishonored and humiliated;
may those who plan evil against me be routed and disgraced.
5 Let them be like chaff caught up by the wind,
with the Angel of the Lord giving them chase.
6 May their way be dark and dangerous,
with the Angel of the Lord pursuing them.
7 For without any provocation
they hid a snare for me;
without any cause
they have dug a trap for me.
8 May destruction overtake each of them unexpectedly;
may every man be ensnared by the net which he himself has hidden;
may he fall into it to his own destruction.
9 Then I shall rejoice greatly in the Lord,
and exult over His salvation.
10 My whole being will say,
"Who is like you, Lord, for delivering the feeble from the one who is too powerful for him;
the wretched and needy from those who would plunder them?"
11 Malevolent witnesses have stood up,
questioning me about matters of which I knew nothing.
12 They repay me evil for good,
so that I am destitute.
13 For my own part, I put on sackcloth when they were ill,
and disciplined myself with fasting.
I prayed for them
with my head bent down on my chest.
14 I acted as though it were my friend or my brother;
I bowed in mourning like a man would in grieving for his mother.
15 But when I was staggering
they rejoiced and gathered together;
malicious wretches whom I did not know
banded together against me,
tearing my reputation to shreds incessantly.

16 Like the most profane mockers of a sacred feast,
they ground their teeth against me.
17 How long will you merely be an onlooker, Lord?
rescue me from their destructive designs:
save my distraught soul from these ravaging lions.
18 I will praise You in the great assembly;
I will laud Your glory amongst a mighty people.
19 Do not allow my enemies to gloat over me wrongfully;
do not let those who hate me without cause wink
spitefully.
20 For they do not discuss peace,
but instead they devise treachery against those who are
peaceably inclined.
21 They taunt me with mouths agape:
they say, "Ha, ha; our own eyes have seen it."
22 You have taken notice, Lord;
do not remain inactive.
Do not stand aloof, Lord.
23 Arouse Yourself and exact justice for me,
my God and my Lord.
Champion my cause.
24 Judge me, Lord God,
in terms of Your own righteousness,
and do not let them rejoice over me.
25 May they not say to themselves,
"Ha, this is what we have wanted all along."
26 May those who rejoice at my woeful plight
be ashamed and utterly confused;
may those who exalt themselves above me
be covered with shame and disgrace.
27 But may those who desire to see me vindicated
shout joyfully and be glad.
May they always be saying,
"The Lord is wonderful: for He takes a keen interest
in the welfare of His servant."
28 Then I shall proclaim Your righteousness,
and Your praise all the day long.

Psalm 36

1 Rebellion flares up stubbornly in the mind of the wicked;
reverence for God has no place in such an outlook.
2 For he flatters himself continually
that his sin cannot be exposed and denounced.
3 Evil and deceit constitute his speech;
he has abandoned proper behavior and good deeds.
4 He devises evil schemes while in bed;
he has established himself in a harmful course of action,
and does not despise evil.
5 Your wonderful love, Lord, extends to the heavens;
Your fidelity reaches to the very skies.
6 Your righteousness is as the divine hills;
Your justice is like a mighty ocean.
You preserve both man and beast alike, Lord.
7 How glorious Your love is, my God:
for this reason mankind desires to shelter
within Your protecting power.
8 They will be satisfied abundantly from Your vast reserves,
and You will provide drink for them from your pleasant
streams.
9 For the source of life itself springs from You;
we shall increase in wisdom as You enlighten us.
10 Continue Your wonderful love to those who know You,
and Your equity to the right-minded.
11 Do not allow any arrogant foot to trample me down;
do not let an evil power expel me.
12 There are the wrongdoers
lying prostrate.
They have been overthrown, and are unable to rise.

Psalm 37

1 Do not show annoyance because of the wicked;
do not become excited over evildoers.
2 For they will wither quickly like grass,
and fade away like green foliage.
3 Trust in the Lord, and do good:
inhabit the land, and enjoy security.

4 Make the Lord your delight,
and He will grant you your desires.
5 Commit your enterprise to the Lord,
and trust Him to accomplish it.
6 He will make your vindication as clear as the day,
and your just cause like high noon.
7 Have faith in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.
Do not become provoked at the one who prospers in his undertaking;
nor at the man who practices evil schemes.
8 Desist from anger, abandon bitterness;
do not show annoyance:
it brings nothing but harm.
9 For wrongdoers shall be rooted out:
but those who trust in the Lord
shall obtain their promised blessings.
10 A little while longer, and the wicked shall cease to exist;
though you look carefully for the place where he was,
it will have disappeared.
11 But the humble will come into their true inheritance,
and be happy amidst great prosperity.
12 Though the wicked may plot against the virtuous,
grinding his teeth in anger at him,
13 the Lord merely laughs,
for He perceives that his doom is approaching.
14 Wrongdoers unsheathe the sword and bend the bow,
to overthrow the needy and poor;
to slay those who live morally.
15 Their sword shall pierce their own hearts,
and their bow shall be smashed.
16 The shortage which the righteous man experiences
is better than the abundant wealth of the wicked.
17 For the strength of the wrongdoers shall be destroyed,
but the Lord will sustain the righteous.
18 The Lord observes the progress of the virtuous,
and their inheritance will last for ever.
19 They will not be left in times of adversity,
and during a famine they will have sufficient.

20 For the wicked shall come to an end;
the enemies of the Lord will waste away
like the glory of the meadows, and vanish in smoke.
21 If the wicked man borrows, he does not repay;
but the righteous is beneficent and generous.
22 For those whom He blesses shall obtain their proper heritage,
but those whom He curses will be obliterated.
23 A man's progress comes from the Lord;
He establishes him, and is pleased with his conduct.
24 He may stumble, but he will not fall headlong,
for the Lord is a support to which he can cling.
25 Once I was young, and now I am aged,
but I have never known the righteous man to be forsaken,
nor his children have to beg for food.
26 He is continually lending, ever generous,
and his descendants become a blessing.
27 Forsake evil, and do what is good,
and you will continue for ever.
28 For the Lord loves justice;
He will not abandon His faithful followers.
They shall be sustained evermore,
but the offspring of the wicked will be destroyed.
29 The virtuous will receive their promised heritage,
and enjoy it continually.
30 The mouth of the righteous man speaks wisdom,
and just pronouncements are on his tongue.
31 The law of his God is in his mind;
his steps do not falter.
32 If the wicked spies on the righteous,
seeking to kill him,
33 the Lord will not relinquish him to his power,
nor will He condemn him when he is brought to trial.
34 Trust in the Lord, and observe His requirements,
and he will promote you so that you emerge triumphant:
you yourself will witness the extinction of the wicked.
35 I have seen the iniquitous triumphing;
towering aloft, flourishing like a native tree.
36 Yet he disappeared; he vanished completely,
and when I searched for him, he was nowhere to be found.

37 Cling to integrity, hold fast to uprightness,
for there is a future for the man who loves peace.
38 But wrongdoers shall perish completely;
the offspring of the wicked shall be destroyed.
39 The salvation of the righteous comes from the Lord;
He is their shelter in time of trouble.
40 The Lord will aid them and rescue them;
He will liberate them from the wicked,
and save them, because they are trusting in Him.

Psalm 38

1 Do not reprimand me in Your anger, Lord;
do not chastise me in Your wrath.
2 For Your missiles have pierced me deeply,
and Your punishment lies heavily upon me.
3 No part of my flesh is free from injury
because of Your displeasure:
my body is no longer healthy
owing to my sin.
4 For my wickedness has overwhelmed me,
weighing me down like a ponderous burden.
5 My wounds are festering and repulsive;
I am bent double through my folly.
6 I am completely bowed down,
going about mourning all the day.
7 My body is full of a feverish disease,
and there is no health in my flesh.
8 My strength is spent; I am badly crushed.
I lament in agony of soul.
9 Lord, all my longing is evident to You,
and my sighing is not hidden from You.
10 My heart palpitates, my vigor has left me;
even my eyesight has failed.
11 My dear ones and my friends keep aloof from my affliction,
and my relatives stand at a distance.
12 Those who desire my death set traps,
and those who wish to injure me plan my ruin,
and devise treachery all day long.
13 But I, like one who is deaf, do not hear;
I am as a dumb man who cannot open his mouth.

14 I am just like a person deprived of hearing,
and as one who has no argument at his command.
15 For my trust is in You, Lord;
You will answer me, my Lord and God.
16 For I think,
"Otherwise they will triumph over me;
when I stumble they will rise up in strength against me."
17 I am prepared for my downfall,
and I am continually conscious of my grief.
18 I confess my guilt,
and repent of my sin.
19 Those who are my enemies without provocation are numerous,
and many are those who hate me wrongfully.
20 Those who requite me evil for good
are my opponents because I follow what is right.
21 Do not forsake me, Lord:
do not desert me, my God.
22 Hasten to my assistance,
my Lord, my deliverer.

Psalm 39

1 I vowed that I would be circumspect in my behavior,
committing no sin in what I said:
that I would muzzle myself
as long as the wicked were in my company.
2 I became dumb with silence;
I was quiet from a good motive,
but my unhappiness increased.
3 My heart smouldered inside me as I meditated;
my temper flared when my tongue spoke of it.
4 Teach me what my end shall be, Lord,
and what the extent of my life is.
Let me know when I shall die.
5 See how You have fixed my life at a few spans of the hand;
my entire existence is as nothing to you.
Indeed, every man alive is an abortive thing.
6 Man walks about like a shadowy image,
and all his fuss is in vain.
He accumulates, without knowing who will succeed to it.

7 And now, what can I expect, Lord?
I have put my trust in You.
8 Rid me of all my wilful sins:
do not make me the scorn of the foolish.
9 I am speechless,
I do not open my mouth,
for it is Your doing.
10 Remove Your affliction from me;
I am exhausted by the blows which You have given me.
11 When You punish and correct a man for his iniquity,
You cause his attractiveness to deteriorate
as though moth-eaten;
indeed, every man is as nothing.
12 Hear my prayer, Lord;
pay attention to my cry.
Do not remain unmoved at my tears,
13 for I am Your guest, a transient,
like all my forebears.
Restore me, that I may be happy before I depart,
and cease to exist.

Psalm 40

1 I waited and waited for the Lord,
till He paid attention to me and heard my entreaty.
2 He drew me up from the yawning chasm,
out of the muddy swamp:
He placed my feet on a solid foundation,
making my steps firm.
3 He gave me a new song to sing,
one of praise to our God.
Many will take notice of it, and become alarmed,
and will trust in the Lord.
4 The man is indeed happy
who has put his faith in the Lord;
who pays no attention to the insolent,
and does not wander after lies.
5 You have done great things, my Lord and God;
Your marvelous achievements and Your purposes for us
make no one comparable with You.

If I were to tell of them and narrate them,
they would be too numerous to count.
6 You did not desire sacrifice or offering,
but You bestowed on me an attentive ear.
You did not demand burnt-offering or sin-offering:
7 Then I said,
"See, I am coming; it is recorded of me in the book
8 that I am happy to fulfil Your will, my God;
for Your law is deep in my mind."
9 I have proclaimed Your equity in the great assembly;
I exercise no restraint over my testimony,
as you, Lord, know very well.
10 I have not kept Your righteousness
concealed in my mind;
I have spoken openly of Your fidelity and Your deliverance,
and I have not withheld Your gracious love and Your
truthfulness from the great assembly.
11 For You, Lord, will not hold back Your sympathy from me;
may Your grace and Your faithfulness continue to be my
protection.
12 For countless sorrows have beset me,
and my sins have overwhelmed me, so that I cannot see.
They are more numerous than the hairs of my head;
my morale is completely shattered.
13 Take pleasure, Lord, in rescuing me;
hurry to my assistance, Lord.
14 Let those who desire to kill me be ashamed and embarrassed:
let them be made to retreat;
let those who desire calamity to overtake me be routed.
15 May those who jeer at me, saying, "Ha, ha,"
be appalled at their humiliation.
16 But let all those who are searching for You be happy and
joyful in You.
May all who cherish Your salvation be saying continually,
"Let God be magnified."
17 For my own part I am poor and helpless;
come to my aid, Lord.
You are my help, my deliverer;
do not delay, my God.

Psalm 41

1 The man is happy who shows consideration for the infirm;
the Lord will rescue him in time of trouble.
2 The Lord will protect and sustain him:
he will be happy on earth.
You will not abandon him to the schemes of his enemies.
3 The Lord will support him on his sickbed.
You will transform all his sufferings when he is ill.
4 For this reason I am begging You to be kind to me, Lord:
restore me, for I have sinned against You.
5 My enemies speak maliciously of me:
"When will he die, and his reputation fade?"
6 If one of them comes to visit me, he speaks empty words,
while in his mind he stores up ill-will,
which he spreads about when he leaves.
7 All who hate me discuss me adversely:
they predict misfortune for me:
8 "A dreadful disease has overtaken him;
when he lies down, he cannot get up again."
9 Even my friend in whom I confided,
who dined at my table,
has behaved contemptuously towards me.
10 I am merely asking You to be gracious to me, Lord,
and to restore me so that I may recompense them.
11 This will serve as the indication of Your favor to me,
that my enemy no longer gains the advantage over me.
12 You are sustaining me in my integrity,
and keeping me in Your care for ever.
13 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
from everlasting to everlasting.

Amen. Amen.

Psalm 42

1 Just as the deer yearns for running water,
so my soul longs for You, my God.
2 My being thirsts for God,
for the living God;
when can I approach and look upon the Divine Presence?
3 My tears have been like food to me day and night,
while people say continually to me,
"Where is your God?"
4 I recall these things as my soul overflows with sorrow:
how I used to go with the crowd,
leading them joyfully to the temple of God
with jubilant shouts and thanksgivings;
a multitude celebrating a festival.
5 Why are you so despondent, my soul,
and why are you so agitated?
Trust in God,
for I shall yet glorify Him,
my Saviour, my God.
6 I am depressed;
for this reason I call You to mind
from the land of the Jordan and the mighty Hermon,
from mount Mizar,
7 where deep echoes to deep in the roaring cataract;
all Your waves and breakers have swamped me.
8 By day the Lord summons His loving grace,
and at night I sing a song to Him,
a prayer to my living God.
9 I say to God, my refuge,
"Why have You overlooked me? Why must I live in
sorrow under the oppression of my enemy?"
10 It is like an injury to my bones
when my enemies reproach me, saying continually,
"Where is your God?"
11 Why are you so despondent, my soul,
and why are you so agitated?
Trust in God,
for I shall praise him once again,
my Saviour, my God.

Psalm 43

1 Vindicate me, my God,
champion my cause against a godless people;
deliver me from deceitful and unjust men,
2 for You are my God, my protector.
Why, then, have You abandoned me?
Why must I live in sorrow under a tyrannous enemy?
3 Send out Your radiance and Your truth:
may they be my guide
to bring me to Your holy hill, and to Your abode;
4 that I may approach the divine altar,
and the God of my supreme rejoicing.
I will praise You on my harp, my God.
5 Why are you despondent, my soul,
and why are you so restless?
Trust in God;
for I shall again praise Him,
my Saviour, my God.

Psalm 44

1 We have heard with our ears, Lord,
our fathers have related
the deeds which You performed in their time,
in olden days.
2 By Your power You dispossessed pagan nations,
that they might take root:
You dispersed peoples,
that they might expand.
3 For they did not gain the country through their military skill,
nor did their own strength win victory for them:
but it was Your mighty power,
Your strength and Your radiant Presence,
through showing favor to them.
4 You, my God, are my Governor,
who brings deliverance to Jacob.
5 Through You we shall beat down our assailants;
in Your name we will trample our enemies underfoot.

6 I place no reliance in my bow,
nor is it my sword that brings victory;
7 You are the One to rescue us from our enemies,
and humiliate those who detest us.
8 We have gloried in God continually,
and we will praise You for ever.
9 Yet You have rejected us and disgraced us;
You have not accompanied our forces to battle.
10 You have made us retreat from the enemy,
and those who hate us have plundered us.
11 You have allowed us to be devoured like sheep,
and have scattered us amongst pagans.
12 You have bartered Your people for a mere trifle,
making no profit from their sale.
13 You have made us contemptuous amongst our neighbors:
the scorn and ridicule of those around us.
14 Through You we have become notorious in the world,
so that nations shake their heads over us.
15 My disgrace is continually with me;
shame covers me,
16 at the remarks of the scoffer and abuser,
because of the revengeful enemy.
17 All this has overtaken us
even though we have not neglected You;
nor have we been unfaithful to Your covenant.
18 Our purpose has never faltered,
nor have our steps swerved from Your path,
19 even when You crumpled us up in the place where jackals prowl,
covering us over with deadly gloom.
20 If we have forgotten the name of God,
or have stretched out our hands to a pagan deity,
21 would not God discover it?
For He knows the secrets of the mind.
22 In fact, we are killed constantly for Your cause;
we are regarded as sheep for slaughtering.
23 Awake, why do You sleep, Lord?
Bestir Yourself;
do not abandon us indefinitely.

24 Why do You conceal Yourself,
ignoring our hardship and misery?
25 For we have collapsed in the dust:
we are lying flat on the ground.
26 Arise,
come to our assistance,
and save us for the sake of Your gracious love.

Psalm 45

1 My heart is bubbling over with a noble theme:
I will address my song to the king:
may my tongue be like the pen of a gifted writer.
2 You are the fairest of humanity;
charm flows through your lips,
therefore God has blessed you eternally.
3 Gird your sword at your side, warrior;
it is your glory and splendor.
4 March forth majestically to victory,
for the cause of truth, humility and justice:
let your strength lead you to perform wonderful exploits.
5 Nations will fall captive to you:
your sharpened arrows will pierce the heart of the royal foes.
6 May your throne, established by God, endure permanently;
may a scepter of equity be your sovereign emblem.
7 You love righteousness and hate wickedness.
Therefore the Lord your God has anointed you
in preference to your associates,
with sweet-smelling oil.
8 Your clothes are fragrant with myrrh, aloes and cassia:
from palaces decorated with ivory,
stringed instruments are making you happy.
9 Princesses are among your maids of honor;
on your right stands the queen,
arrayed in fine gold from Ophir.
10 Listen, daughter, and take notice;
pay attention to me.
"Forget your own people and your family home;

11 "When the king desires your beauty,
submit to him, for he is your lord."
12 The inhabitants of Tyre will be in attendance with a gift;
the richest in the land will entreat your favor.
13 Inside the palace, the princess is magnificently dressed;
her robes are embroidered with gold.
14 In clothes of rich hue she is led to the king
with her companions, a maiden escort,
brought by her.
15 They are conducted amid gladness and rejoicing;
they enter the royal palace.
16 May your sons succeed to the rank of their fathers;
may you appoint them princes over all the land.
17 I will make your name a memory for successive generations,
that nations may praise you for ever.

Psalm 46

1 God is our protection and strength;
a reliable help when trouble occurs.
2 So then we will not be afraid
though the earth itself is transformed,
and the mountains collapse into the deep oceans,
3 with its waters raging and foaming;
and the mountains quivering at its mighty surge.
4 There is a river
whose tributaries bring joy to the divine city,
the holy abode of the Most High.
5 God is within her; she will not be overthrown.
God will assist her when morning dawns.
6 Nations make a commotion, kingdoms collapse;
thunder crashes out, the earth disintegrates.
7 The Lord, the God of armies, is with us,
the God of Jacob is our sure defense.
8 Come and view the doings of the Lord,
and see the amazing things He has achieved on earth.
9 He puts an end to war throughout the world:
He smashes the bow and snaps the spear,
burning vehicles of war with fire.

10 "Stop your striving, and recognize that I am God;
I am elevated amongst the nations,
I am magnified on earth."
11 The Lord, the God of armies, is with us;
the God of Jacob is our sure defense.

Psalm 47

1 Clap your hands, you people;
shout to God with a jubilant voice.
2 For the Lord, the Most High, is to be revered;
He reigns supreme over all the earth.
3 He makes pagan nations our vassals,
bringing peoples under our authority.
4 He selects our inheritance for us,
majestic Jacob, whom He cherishes.
5 God ascended among triumphal shouts;
amid the blare of trumpets the Lord went up.
6 Sing praises to God,
sing praises.
Sing praises to our King,
sing praises.
7 For God is king over all the earth;
celebrate His praises skillfully.
8 God rules over the nations,
God is seated upon His sacred throne.
9 The nobles from pagan peoples assemble,
to be one with the people of the God of Abraham.
For the princes of the earth belong to God,
who is highly exalted.

Psalm 48

1 The Lord is great, and deserving of all praise
in our divine city,
His sacred hill.
2 Excellently situated,
Mount Zion is the pride of the whole earth.
In the north is the city of the great King.

3 God has revealed Himself in her palaces
as a trustworthy shelter.
4 See how monarchs assembled
and passed through together.
5 When they saw it, they were stunned:
panic gripped them; they fled in terror.
6 Trembling seized them on that very spot,
and throes like those of childbirth.
7 You shattered the ships of Tarshish
by means of an east wind.
8 Just as we have heard,
so we have seen in the city of the Lord, the God of armies;
in our divine city,
which God will establish for ever.
9 We have meditated on Your gracious love, Lord,
within Your temple precincts.
10 Let Your renown, Lord,
extend like Your glory to the ends of the earth:
for You are completely righteous.
11 Mount Zion is jubilant,
the towns of Judah are joyful
because You have meted out justice.
12 Go on a tour of Zion;
travel around and count her turrets.
13 Examine her defenses, survey her fortresses,
that you may inform a succeeding generation,
14 "Such is God,
our God for eternity.
He will guide us to the very end."

Psalm 49

1 Listen to this, all you peoples:
pay attention, you inhabitants of the earth;
2 offspring of men, human society;
rich and poor alike.
3 I am speaking wisdom:
my thoughts show understanding.

4 I will clothe my thoughts in proverbial form:
with the twang of a harp I will solve my problem.
5 Why should I be afraid when calamity strikes,
and when my guilty adversaries surround me?
6 — men who are trusting in their wealth,
and bragging about their accumulated riches.
7 Surely no man can ever redeem himself,
nor offer to God a ransom for his life.
8 For the redemption of the soul is too costly;
so that he must abandon the idea completely
9 that he will live for ever,
and not experience death.
10 Indeed, he notices that wise men die;
that foolish and ignorant perish alike,
leaving their wealth to others.
11 Their graves are their perpetual abodes,
their resting places through the ages.
even though they named their lands after themselves.
12 Man in his splendor has no stability:
he is like the animals which perish.
13 This is the destiny of the self-sufficient.
and the end of those who are satisfied with their own opinions.
14 They are herded like sheep to the grave;
death urges them on.
The virtuous will be superior to them in the tomb;
their form will waste away.
and the abode of the dead will be their home.
15 But God will certainly redeem me from the clutches of the grave,
when it lays hold upon me.
16 Do not worry when someone becomes rich.
and when the wealth of his establishment increases.
17 For when he dies, he can take nothing away:
his splendor will not accompany him.
18 Though he regards himself as fortunate whilst he is alive,
and though men admire him when prosperity comes,
19 he must join the race of his forebears
who will never again see light.
20 Man in his magnificence has no durability.
He is like the animals which meet their end.

Psalm 50

1 The Lord, the supreme God, has spoken;
He summons the earth from the east to the west.
2 From Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God shines gloriously.
3 Our God will come, and will not be inactive;
before Him is a devouring fire;
Around Him rages a furious storm.
4 He summons the heavens above,
and the earth, to judge His people.
5 "Assemble my saints,
who have entered with Me into a sacrificial covenant."
6 That the heavens may declare His righteousness,
for He is a just God.
7 "Listen, my people, and let me speak:
I am remonstrating with you.
for I am God, your God.
8 "I am not reproving you on account of your sacrifices,
for your burnt-offerings are constantly before Me.
9 "I will not accept any bullock from your household,
not even a ram from your sheep-pen.
10 "I have all the animals of the forest;
the cattle upon a thousand hillsides.
11 "I am familiar with all the mountain birds,
and whatever moves in the fields belongs to me.
12 "I would not mention it to you even if I were hungry,
for the world is Mine, and everything in it.
13 "Do I eat the flesh of bullocks,
or drink the blood of rams?
14 "Sacrifice a thank-offering to God:
offer your vows to the Most High.
15 "Summon Me in time of trouble:
I will liberate you, and you will reverence Me."
16 But God says to the wicked,
"What right have you to speak of My enactments,
or mention My covenant in your talk?
17 "You who detest discipline,
and cast My decrees behind you.

18 "When you see a thief you are friendly with him,
and you associate with adulterers.
19 "You open your mouth freely with malicious intent;
your tongue formulates deceit.
20 "You can live with your brother and defame him:
you slander your own mother's son.
21 "You have been doing such things,
and because I was silent you thought that I was such another as yourself;
I will correct you in this, and prove it to you clearly.
22 "Take notice, those of you who forget God,
lest I dismember you, and there is no one to rescue you.
23 "The man who offers thanksgiving as a sacrifice glorifies Me;
to him who orders the course of his life properly
I will extend divine deliverance."

Psalm 51

1 Take pity on me, my God, in your divine sympathy;
wipe out my sins through your abundant mercy.
2 Rid me completely of my guilt,
and cleanse me from my sin.
3 For I am fully aware of my failings;
my wrongdoing confronts me continually.
4 I have sinned against You,
You alone,
and have done what You regard as being wrong.
So then You are acting justly when You pronounce sentence;
You are behaving impartially in Your judgments.
5 See how I was brought to birth in guilt;
my mother conceived me in iniquity.
6 You take a delight in truth;
You have initiated me into the hidden depths of wisdom.
7 Expiate my sin with hyssop, that I may be clean;
wash me, that I may be whiter than snow.
8 Let me listen again to sounds of gladness and joy;
let the bones which You have crushed be exultant.
9 Turn away from my sins,
and wipe out all my guilt.

10 Produce in me a purified heart, my God;
a new, unwavering attitude of mind.
11 Do not dismiss me from Your presence,
nor deprive me of Your holy Spirit.
12 Restore to me the joy found in Your salvation,
and give me a charitable disposition to assist me.
13 I will counsel sinners as to Your intentions,
so that trangressors will return to You.
14 Rescue me from death, my saving God,
that I may sing loudly of Your righteousness.
15 Open my lips, Lord,
that my mouth may proclaim Your praise.
16 You do not desire sacrifice;
nor would You be gratified, even if I gave You a burnt-offering.
17 My sacrifice, my God, is a shattered spirit;
You will not scorn a broken and penitent heart, my God.
18 In Your divine mercy
show favor to Zion.
Rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.
19 Then You will welcome proper sacrifices,
burnt-offerings and whole burnt-offerings.
At that time bullocks will be offered upon Your altar.

Psalm 52

1 Why do you boast of evil, you wicked tyrant?
Divine grace exists continually.
2 You devise evil;
your tongue is like a whetted razor, practicing deceit.
3 You cherish evil more than good;
you prefer lying to speaking the truth.
4 You love injurious words
and treacherous speech.
5 May God destroy you for ever;
may He snatch you up and pluck you out of your dwelling,
and uproot you from the midst of human life.
6 The upright will observe it, and become awed;
they will laugh at him, saying,

7 "Look at the man who refused to take shelter in God,
but trusted in the accumulation of his wealth.
and flourished in his wickedness."
8 But I am like a green olive tree in the house of God;
I am trusting in divine mercy eternally.
9 I will praise You for ever for what You have done,
and in company with Your saints
I will proclaim the goodness of Your nature.

Psalm 53

1 Profane men say to themselves, "There is no God."
They are corrupt, and perpetrate abominable deeds;
not one of them does good.
2 From Heaven the Lord surveys humanity,
to see if there are any sufficiently discerning
to search for God.
3 They are all apostate;
to a man they have become corrupt.
None of them does good, not a single one.
4 Are those miscreants devoid of sense,
devouring God's people like bread,
without consideration for the Lord?
5 In that very situation they were desperately alarmed,
because God appeared on the side of the upright.
6 Though you might thwart the plans of the poor,
the Lord is their refuge,
7 who bestows deliverance upon Israel from Zion.
When the Lord reverses the fortunes of His people,
Jacob will be jubilant; Israel will be joyful.

Psalm 54

1 Save me by Your power, my God,
and grant me justice by Your might.
2 Hear my prayer, my God;
pay attention to what I am saying.
3 For hostile people have risen against me,
and violent men are desirous of killing me.
They have no regard for God.

4 But God is my helper;
the Lord is sustaining me.
5 May He repay my foes with evil.
Destroy them because of Your fidelity.
6 Then will I offer You a liberal sacrifice:
I will proclaim the goodness of Your name, Lord,
7 when You have rescued me from every affliction,
and my eye has feasted in delight on my enemies.

Psalm 55

1 Pay attention, Lord, to my prayer;
do not hide from my petitioning.
2 Listen to me, and answer me;
I am weighed down with trouble.
3 I am driven to distraction by the clamor of the enemy,
and by the oppression of the wicked;
for they burden me with affliction
and violently assail me.
4 My mind is awhirl inside me;
deadly terror has engulfed me.
5 Fear and trembling overtake me,
and shivering seizes me,
6 so that I say,
"If only I were given wings like a dove,
I would fly away, and live in peace.
7 "I would wander far away,
and make my home in the wilderness.
8 "I would quickly prepare my shelter
from the driving wind and the storm."
9 Destroy them, Lord; confuse their plans,
for I observe violence and conflict in the city.
10 Day and night they patrol her walls,
while within her rage distress and tumult.
11 Wickedness is rampant;
oppression and fraud are for ever in her streets.
12 It was not an enemy who reproached me;
I could have endured that.

It was not one who hated me
that asserted himself against me;
for in that case I could have shunned him.
13 But it was you,
my valued companion, my bosom friend,
14 who formulated pleasant plans with me:
who walked with the rejoicing multitude to the temple of God.
15 May destruction fall upon them;
let them be buried alive,
for wickedness is deeply entrenched in their dwelling.
16 For my part I will call to God,
and the Lord will rescue me.
17 Morning, noon and night I will voice my complaint and lament,
and He will hear me.
18 He will deliver me safely from the conflict,
though I have numerous opponents.
19 God will hear me, and subdue them,
for He is enthroned through eternity.
With Him there is no change.
yet they do not revere Him as God.
20 He used his power against his friends;
he violated his agreement.
21 Smoother than butter was his speech,
yet there was hostility in his heart.
Softer than oil were his words,
yet they were drawn swords.
22 Commit your problems to the Lord
and He will uphold you.
He will never allow the righteous to be undermined.
23 You will hurl them down into the engulfing grave, Lord;
You will not allow murderers and deceivers
to enjoy even half their allotted time.
For my own part I will trust in You.

Psalm 56

1 Take pity on me, my God,
for people are trampling on me;
the enemy is oppressing me continually;

2 My foes beat me down violently all day long,
for many of them are fighting me bitterly.
3 On those occasions when I am afraid,
I will trust in You.
4 In God, whose promises I extol,
in God I have placed unwavering trust.
What can mortal man do to me?
5 They are perpetually thwarting my plans;
all their scheming is directed to a bad end.
6 They assemble and lie in wait,
watching my every movement,
as those who plot against my life.
7 Repay them for their iniquity;
overthrow the people in anger, my God.
8 You have kept count of my wanderings;
store up my tears in Your container.
Are they not noted down in Your record?
9 Then my opponents will be routed
at the time when I call.
I am sure of this,
for God is on my side.
10 In God, whose promises I commend,
in the Lord, whose assurances I praise,
11 in God I have placed unwavering trust.
What can mortal man do to me?
12 I am under an obligation to You, my God;
I will pay thank-offerings to You
13 because You have saved me from death.
Did You not prevent my feet from stumbling?
So now I may conduct myself in the Divine Presence
with brightness and vigor.

Psalm 57

1 Show mercy to me, my God,
take pity on me,
for I am looking to You for shelter,
and I will take refuge in Your protecting power
until the emergency has passed.

2 I will petition the Lord Most High;
the God who accomplishes my aims for me.
3 He will dispatch aid from heaven to rescue me,
and will shame those who trample me down.
God will demonstrate His loving mercy and His fidelity.
4 I am among lions indeed;
I have to deal with angry people
whose teeth are javelins and arrows,
and their tongue a whetted sword.
5 May You be magnified, my God, above the skies:
may Your glory extend across the whole earth.
6 They have set a snare for my feet;
my mind is burdened with trouble.
They have dug out a hole in my path,
but have fallen into its depths themselves.
7 My mind is resolute, my God.
my heart is steadfast.
I will sing and laud Your praises.
8 Let me wake up;
make the lute and harp vibrate.
I will rouse the dawn.
9 I will thank You publicly, Lord,
and praise You to pagan nations.
10 For Your merciful love reaches in its greatness to heaven;
Your truth extends to the clouds.
11 May You be magnified, my God, above the skies;
may Your glory extend over the whole earth.

Psalm 58

1 Do you indeed decree justice, you sovereign rulers?
Do you judge mankind fairly?
2 No; in your minds you devise injustice;
by your actions you promote violence on earth.
3 The wicked are aliens from the very womb;
they go astray from birth, telling lies.
4 Their poison is like serpent's venom:
they are like the deaf asp which shuts its ears,

5 and will not listen to the sound of charmers
weaving lore-taught spells.
6 Shatter their teeth in their mouths, my God:
tear out the fangs of the lion cubs, Lord.
7 Let them disappear like water draining away;
let them come to an end like the discharging of an arrow.
8 Let them be like an early miscarriage slipping away.
May they, like an abortion, never see the light.
9 May he whisk them away
even before your cooking utensils can feel the heat of the thorns,
whether green or blazing.
10 The upright will be glad to witness his revenge;
he will wade in the streaming blood of the wicked.
11 So then people will say,
"There is certainly a reward for the righteous;
there is indeed a God who is judge on earth."

Psalm 59

1 Liberate me from my enemies, my God:
protect me from my assailants.
2 Rescue me from evildoers,
and keep me secure from murderers.
3 See how they lie in ambush for me:
violent men congregate against me,
though not for any wrongdoing or sin of mine, Lord God.
4 Though I am innocent
they make hurried preparations:
stand up, come beside me and observe them.
5 Lord God of armies, God of Israel,
awake, and punish all the heathen.
Show no mercy to any of the wicked traitors.
6 At night they return, whining like dogs,
and slink about the city.
7 See them foaming at the mouth,
with whetted fangs within their lips.
"Who can hear us?" they say.
8 But You, Lord, simply laugh at them;
You ridicule all the pagan nations.

9 I will trust in You, my strength,
for God is my fortress.
10 My compassionate God will precede me:
God will let me gloat over my enemies.
11 Do not slaughter them lest my people forget.
Disperse them by Your power, and lay them low,
Lord, our protection.
12 Let them be trapped
by their sinful speech and their utterances;
by their proud curses, and the lies which they tell.
13 Devour them in anger; ruin them
that they may exist no longer.
Then it will be realized to the ends of the earth
that God rules over Jacob.
14 At night they return, whining like dogs,
and slink about the city.
15 They roam about for something to eat;
if they are not satisfied, they growl.
16 But I will sing of Your Power;
I will loudly praise Your gracious love at dawn,
for You have been a shelter for me,
a refuge in my emergency.
17 I will sing Your praises, my Strength,
for God is my refuge, my loving God.

Psalm 60

1 You have spurned and shattered us, Lord;
You have become angry with us, and have turned against us.
2 You have made the earth quake, You have split it open;
seal up its quivering fissures.
3 You have subjected Your people to hardship;
You have given us intoxicating wine to drink.
4 You have set up a standard for those who fear You,
which they can rally around when hostile arms approach,
5 so that Your cherished one may be rescued.
Give victory by Your mighty power, and answer us.

6 God spoke from his sanctuary,
"I will divide Shechem in triumph,
and apportion the valley of Succoth.
7 "Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh also.
Ephraim is My principal stronghold;
Judah is My emblem of authority.
8 "Moab is My wash-bowl;
upon Edom I toss my sandal.
I have shouted in triumph over Philistia.
9 "Who will guide Me to the fortified city?
Who will lead Me as far as Edom?
10 Had You not rejected us, Lord?
At least, You did not accompany our armies.
11 Give us help against the enemy;
human assistance is futile.
12 Through God we shall perform brave deeds:
He Himself will trample down our enemies.

Psalm 61

1 Listen to my entreaty, my God;
pay attention to my prayer.
2 I will call to You from the borders of the earth
in my weariness of spirit.
Be my guide;
set me up on a towering crag.
3 For You are my shelter:
a strong fortress against the enemy.
4 Let me dwell in Your habitations eternally:
let me find security within Your protecting power.
5 For You, my God, have heard my solemn promises;
You have restored the prosperity of those who revere
Your name.
6 You will prolong the days of the royal life;
his years will continue over many generations.
7 He will stay for ever in the divine presence.
May mercy and truth watch over him.
8 So I will sing praise to Your name continually,
and discharge my vows daily.

Psalm 62

1 To God alone I commit myself silently:
from Him comes my deliverance.
2 He only is my sure foundation and my help:
He is my refuge,
I shall not be dispossessed.
3 How long will you people continue to assail a person,
striking him down as though he were a leaning fence,
or a tottering wall?
4 They plot with the sole intention
of removing him from his eminent position.
They delight in lies;
they bless when they talk, but curse inwardly.
5 To God alone I commit myself silently,
for my hope springs from Him.
6 He is the only sure foundation and help that I have:
He is my refuge,
I shall not be overthrown.
7 On God depends my safety and my honor:
my God is my shelter,
my powerful defense.
8 Trust Him continually, all you nations;
disclose the depths of your minds to Him.
God is our refuge.
9 Humanity as such is worthless:
the offspring of man is unreliable.
When weighed in the balances, they go up;
they are just like a vapor.
10 Have no faith in extortion;
place no futile hope in robbery.
If wealth accumulates,
do not set your mind on it.
11 God has spoken once:
twice I have heard
that power is a divine prerogative.
12 and that merciful favor is part of Your nature,
for You repay a person according to his doings.

Psalm 63

1 God, you are my God:
I am searching for You.
I long for You earnestly,
with my whole being I yearn for You,
as in a parched and arid land, where there is no water.
2 Just as I have observed You in the sanctuary,
when I beheld Your power and glory:
3 because Your merciful love is preferable to life itself,
I will praise You.
4 So then I will bless You while I live:
in Your name I will raise prayerful hands.
5 My longing will be satisfied as with succulent fat meat:
I will praise You with tuneful songs
6 when I remember You in my bed,
and commune with You throughout the night.
7 For You have been of assistance to me.
and under Your mighty protection I shout for joy.
8 I have clung fast to You;
You have supported me by Your great power.
9 Those who are desirous of killing me
will descend to the depths of the earth.
10 They will be abandoned to the powerful sword,
and become prey for jackals.
11 But the king will rejoice in God;
all who swear allegiance to Him will praise Him,
for the mouths of liars will be closed.

Psalm 64

1 Listen to me, my God, as I complain:
save me from fear of the enemy.
2 Protect me from the secret schemes of the wicked,
and from the clamoring of wrongdoers
3 who sharpen their tongues like a sword,
taking aim with bitter words for arrows,
4 to shoot from ambush at the innocent.
They let fly boldly without warning.

5 They confirm their intent by an evil plan:
 they discuss the setting of traps in secret, saying,
 "Who will notice them?"
6 They go over the plot thoroughly:
 "We have discovered a cleverly devised scheme,"
 for the human heart and mind is indeed cunning.
7 But God shoots a missile at them;
 all of a sudden they are wounded.
8 They will come to ruin through their malicious speech;
 all who behold them will shake their heads.
9 Everyone will then be awestruck,
 and proclaim what God has done,
 pondering upon His works.
10 The upright will rejoice in the Lord, and trust in Him;
 all who are virtuous will be most happy.

Psalm 65

1 Praise is due to You in Zion, my God,
 and vows will be discharged to You in Jerusalem.
2 All mankind will approach You,
 because You listen to prayer.
3 Guilty deeds overwhelm me,
 yet You forgive our wrongdoing.
4 Happy indeed is he whom You choose,
 and allow to reside in your dwelling.
 May we be satisfied with Your joyful shrine,
 Your sacred temple.
5 You will reply to us with wonderful deeds of vindication,
 our delivering God:
 You are the hope of the remotest lands,
 and of the far-flung shores.
6 He who has set mountains in position by His might
 is surrounded with power.
7 He soothes alike raging oceans with roaring waves,
 and turbulent humanity,
8 so that the inhabitants of distant lands
 become awed at Your portents;
 You can give occasion for rejoicing at dawn and sunset.

9 You have shown consideration for the land
in watering it abundantly.
You have enriched it greatly.
You have prepared the sacred river,
filling it with water for their grain.
In this way You have made provision,
10 by saturating its furrows, levelling its ridges,
moistening it with showers,
and blessing its young growth.
11 You have adorned the year with Your opulence;
fertility abounds wherever You have gone.
12 The pastures in the plain are verdant;
the hills resound with jubilation.
13 The meadows are covered with flocks,
the valleys are covered with grain.
People shout for joy,
and sing to each other.

Psalm 66

1 Let all the earth shout joyously to God,
2 sing of His glorious name,
and give Him resounding praise,
3 saying to God,
"How awesome are Your doings! Through Your immense strength Your enemies will cower before You.
4 "All the earth does You homage;
they sing praises to You,
and extol Your name."
5 Come and observe the works of God;
he is awe-inspiring in His activity among men.
6 He transformed the sea into dry land;
people crossed the river on foot there.
Let us rejoice in Him,
7 the Mighty Ruler
who is present among the nations.
May the rebellious never flaunt themselves.
8 Bless our God, you people,
give Him resounding praise,

9 for He has sustained us in the world,
and has not allowed our steps to falter.
10 You have tested us, Lord;
just as silver is purified,
so You have refined us.
11 You have made us enter prison,
You put chains about our waists.
12 You allowed men to be placed over us;
we endured torments of fire and water,
yet You brought us out to abundant prosperity.
13 I will enter Your shrine with burnt-offerings;
I will discharge to You the obligations
14 which my lips framed
and my mouth promised when I was in difficulty.
15 I will offer You burnt-offerings of fatlings
with the fragrant smoke of rams;
I will sacrifice bullocks and goats.
16 Come, listen, all you who reverence God,
and I will relate what He has done for me.
17 I cried loudly to Him,
and praised Him in my speech.
18 Had I nursed evil in my mind,
the Lord would not have listened.
19 But God did hear,
and paid attention to my prayerful appeal.
20 May God be blessed,
for He did not reject my petition,
and did not withdraw His loving mercy from me.

Psalm 67

1 May God be merciful to us, and bless us;
may He radiate His presence upon us,
2 that mortal men may know Your intentions,
and every nation recognize Your ability to save.
3 Peoples will praise You, Lord;
all races will sing to Your glory.

4 The nations will rejoice and be jubilant,
because You judge mankind equitably,
and guide the races of the earth.
5 Peoples will praise You, Lord;
all races will sing to Your glory.
6 The earth has yielded its produce;
God, our own God, has blessed us.
7 God has bestowed His blessing upon us:
let every corner of the earth revere Him.

Psalm 68

1 When God arises,
His enemies are dispersed,
and those who hate Him flee from His presence.
2 As smoke is scattered by the wind,
as wax melts in the presence of heat,
so the wicked are destroyed from before God.
3 But the virtuous will be happy;
they will be joyful in the Divine presence,
and radiant with contentment.
4 Sing to God,
sing praise to His name;
give glory to Him who rides upon the storm clouds.
His name is Jehovah;
be joyful in His presence.
5 Father of orphans, Protector of widows,
such is the Lord in His holy abode.
6 God brings the disconsolate back home;
He leads the imprisoned out to success,
while the rebellious inhabit an arid land.
7 When You went out, Lord, among Your people,
when You tramped through the desert,
8 the earth quaked,
the skies rained torrents at the Divine presence;
even Mount Sinai trembled
at the sacred presence of the God of Israel.
9 You, Lord, poured down abundant rain,
refreshing Your inheritance when it was languishing.

10 Your people inhabited it;
You provided for the destitute in Your goodness, Lord.
11 The Lord issued the command;
those who proclaimed it were a mighty company.
12 "Kings and their armies are routed and fleeing;
the housewife divides the booty,
13 "while squatting among cooking utensils;
a dove's wings overlaid with silver,
and its wing feathers with yellow gold."
14 When the Almighty dispossessed kings there,
it snowed in Salmon.
15 Hill of Bashan, mountain of many peaks;
sacred indeed is the hill of Bashan.
16 Why do you look enviously, you many-crested hills,
at the mountain which God has chosen for His dwelling?
There the Lord will abide perpetually.
17 The divine chariots number myriads,
thousands upon thousands.
The Lord came from Sinai, His sanctuary.
18 You have emerged victorious,
carrying off captives and receiving tribute from men,
even from rebels,
that the Lord might dwell there.
19 May the Lord be blessed for sustaining us daily,
the God who is our deliverance:
20 the God who is our saving Deity —
the Lord God, by whom we escape death.
21 God will indeed crush the power of His enemies,
and the stubborn will of him who persists in guilty conduct.
22 The Lord said,
"I will bring them back from Bashan;
I will restore them from the depths of the sea,
23 "in order that your feet may wade in blood,
and the tongue of your dogs have a share of your enemies."
24 Your triumphal processions have been seen:
the processions of my God and King in the holy place.
25 The singers precede, the musicians follow;
between them are maidens playing on tambourines:

26 "Bless God the Lord in the assembly,
you issue of the fountain of Israel."
27 There in front
is the junior tribe Benjamin,
with the nobility of Judah beside them:
the princes of Zebulon and the princes of Naphtali.
28 Muster your resources, Lord;
display Your power, my God, since You have worked on our behalf.
29 Because of Your temple in Jerusalem,
kings shall bring presents to You.
30 Rebuke that beast which inhabits the papyrus reeds,
the conclave of princes which dominates the offspring of the people;
trample down those who crave for tribute,
and rout the nations who delight in fighting.
31 Rich tribute will come from Egypt;
Ethiopia will eagerly extend her hands to God.
32 Sing to God, you earthly kingdoms;
sing praises to the Lord,
33 to Him who soars in the ancient heavens.
See how He thunders out a crashing roar.
34 Give glory to God,
majestic over Israel,
mighty in the skies.
35 God is awe-inspiring in His sanctuary;
the God of Israel bestows strength and power
upon the people blessed by God.

Psalm 69

1 Rescue me, my God,
for the waters have risen to drown me.
2 I am sinking in a deep swamp where there is no footing;
I have come into deep water,
and the current is sweeping me away.
3 I am worn out from crying;
my throat is parched,
and my sight is failing while I wait for my God.

4 Those who hate me wantonly
are more numerous than the hairs of my head;
my enemies who would destroy me wrongfully are many.
How can I make restitution for that which I did not steal?
5 You are well aware of my foolishness, my God,
and my guilt is not hidden from You.
6 Lord God of armies,
do not let those who trust in You be discredited on my account;
do not allow those who are searching for You to be disconcerted because of me, God of Israel.
7 For Your sake I have endured abuse;
shame has spread over my face.
8 I have become a stranger to my brothers,
an alien to my mother's sons.
9 Enthusiasm for Your house has devoured me,
and the affronts of Your abusers have fallen on me.
10 When I make myself mourn through fasting,
it becomes my rebuke.
11 When I make sackcloth my garment,
I become a joke to them.
12 Those in positions of authority criticize me,
and I have become the skit of the drunkards.
13 For my part, I am praying to You, Lord God;
answer me, my God, in Your abundant mercy,
when the time is ripe.
14 Rescue me from the swamp by Your saving truth,
so that I do not become submerged;
let me be delivered from those who hate me,
and from the deep waters.
15 Do not let the current sweep me away;
do not allow the deep to engulf me,
nor the grave to close over me.
16 Answer me, Lord God, for Your mercy is gratifying;
respond to me because of Your great sympathy.
17 Do not hide Yourself from Your servant
for I am in distress.
Answer me speedily.

18 Come to me, and rescue me;
liberate me on account of my enemies.
19 You are aware how I am affronted, disgraced and insulted;
my opponents are all well-known to you.
20 Abuse has broken my spirit, and I am ill;
I looked for sympathy, but none was forthcoming:
and for consolers, but found none.
21 They put poison in my food,
and gave me sour wine to drink when I was thirsty.
22 May their own tables cause their downfall,
and their thank-offerings become a trap.
23 May their eyesight fail, so that they cannot see;
make their bodies tremble incessantly.
24 Flood them with Your anger,
and let Your violent fury engulf them.
25 May their dwellings become desolate:
let no one inhabit their tents.
26 For they persecute the one whom You have afflicted,
and increase the agony of those whom You have injured.
27 Let their punishments be increased,
and deny them the right to acquittal.
28 Let them be obliterated from the record of the living,
and not enrolled with the virtuous.
29 But though I am afflicted and in distress,
Your deliverance, my God, will restore me.
30 I will praise the Divine name in song,
and will magnify Him with thanksgiving.
31 This will gratify the Lord God
far more than an ox or bullock with horns and hoofs.
32 May the humble see it and rejoice:
let those who are searching for God be revived in spirit.
33 For the Lord God listens to the destitute,
and does not scorn His prisoners.
34 Let heaven and earth praise Him,
with the ocean, and all that moves in it.
35 For God will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah,
that people may dwell there and occupy it.
36 The children of His followers shall inherit it,
and those who cherish His name shall live there.

Psalm 70

1 Rescue me, my God;
hurry to my assistance, Lord God.
2 Let those who desire to kill me be shamed and disgraced;
may those who wish me adversity be routed and dishonored.
3 May they be thwarted as a consequence of their shame,
who ridicule, "Ha, ha."
4 May all who are searching for You be happy and joyful in You;
may those who cherish Your salvation say constantly,
"Let God be glorified."
5 But I am wretched and poor;
hurry to me, my God.
You are my help and deliverer;
do not delay, Lord God.

Psalm 71

1 I have put my trust in You, Lord God;
let me never be disappointed.
2 Rescue me and liberate me because of my righteousness;
pay attention to me, and save me.
3 Be my safe shelter to which I may go continually,
for You have given instructions for me to be preserved.
You are my refuge and my fortress.
4 Release me, my God, from the grasp of the wicked;
from the clutches of the evil and tyrannous,
5 for You, Lord God, are my hope,
and my confidence from my youth.
6 I have leaned upon You from birth,
for it was You who delivered me from the maternal womb.
I am continually praising You.
7 Though to many I have seemed somewhat peculiar,
yet You are my permanent shelter.
8 My speech will be full of Your praise,
and Your magnificence all day long.
9 Do not reject me when old age approaches:
do not forsake me when my strength diminishes.
10 For my enemies malign me,
and those who lie in ambush for me deliberate together,

11 saying,
"God has abandoned him; pursue and seize him,
for there is nobody to rescue him."
12 Do not withdraw from me, my God;
hurry, my God, to my aid.
13 Let all my rivals be shamed and destroyed;
may those who are anxious to injure me
have contempt and disgrace poured upon them.
14 But I will trust continually,
and add to all Your praise.
15 I will tell of Your equity and Your saving deeds all day long,
for their number is beyond my knowledge.
16 Though I should attain to great age, Lord God,
I could only continue to acknowledge Your righteousness.
17 You, my God, have taught me from my youth until now;
I will proclaim Your wonderful doings.
18 So then, even in old age,
and when I am grey-headed, my God,
do not renounce me,
that I may proclaim Your power to this generation,
and Your might to all that will follow.
19 For your righteousness, my God, extends to the heavens above;
You have performed great deeds.
Who is Your equal?
20 Though You have inflicted distress and misfortune on me,
revive me again,
and bring me back from the remote places of the earth.
21 Increase my greatness,
and comfort me again.
22 Then I will praise You with the lyre;
I will sing of Your fidelity, my God, to the harp,
for You are the Holy One of Israel.
23 My lips will frame joyful shouts when I praise You,
and so will my soul, which You have redeemed.
24 I shall be telling of Your righteousness all day long,
because those who desired to harm me have been shamed
and disgraced.

Psalm 72

1 Endow the king with Your authority, Lord,
and the royal son with Your fairness,
2 that he may judge Your people impartially,
dispensing justice to the afflicted.
3 May the mountains bring the people prosperity,
and the hills righteousness.
4 He will judge the oppressed amongst the people,
and render assistance to the poor.
He will trample on the tyrant.
5 May he endure as long as the sun lasts,
and while the moon shines — for all time.
6 May he descend like rain upon the mown grass:
like showers which water the earth.
7 May fairness abound in his time,
and peace flourish, till the moon shall exist no longer.
8 May he govern from sea to sea,
and from the river to the bounds of the earth.
9 May his enemies bow before him:
may his rivals grovel in the dust.
10 May the rulers of Tarshish and the islands render him tribute:
and the rulers of Sheba and Seba bring him offerings.
11 May all monarchs pay homage to him,
and all nations be his vassals.
12 For he rescues the afflicted when he cries out,
and the oppressed who has no helper.
13 He is sympathetic towards the frail and needy,
and saves the life of the poor.
14 He delivers them from wrong and violence,
for they are valuable in his estimation.
15 May he live long,
and receive gold from Sheba;
may intercession be made for him continually.
May they bless him all the day.
16 May there be abundance of grain in the land,
to the very tops of the hills.
May its ripe ears flutter like Lebanon,
and may the city dwellers flourish like grass on the ground.

17 May his name endure for ever:
may his reputation thrive while the sun lasts.
May mankind be prospered through him,
and all the nations call him blessed.
18 Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel,
who alone performs wonderful deeds.
19 Let His glorious name be blessed eternally;
may the entire earth be replete with His majesty.
Amen. Amen.

Psalm 73

1 God is indeed good to Israel,
to such as are right-minded.
2 As for me, my foothold had virtually disappeared;
my steps had almost slipped.
3 For I envied the braggarts
when I saw how well the wicked were doing.
4 They have no nagging pains;
their bodies are sturdy and healthy.
5 They do not fall foul of trouble like others,
and are not afflicted like the rest of humanity.
6 In consequence they flaunt their pride like a necklace;
violence wraps around them like clothing.
7 Their imagination exceeds the best that can be provided;
their thoughts emerge from deep inside them.
8 They mock, and speak maliciously:
they loftily threaten tyranny.
9 They have assigned authority to their words in heaven,
and what they say traverses the earth.
10 For this reason people resort to them.
and greedily gulp down their pronouncements.
11 They also say,
"How can God know?" and,
"Is the Most High aware of this?"
12 Take notice of these iniquitous men
in their continual prosperity,
and the wealth which they have accumulated.
13 While I have been engaged to no avail
in keeping my mind pure, and living a blameless life:
14 I have been afflicted all day long,
and punished morning by morning.
15 If I had said,
"I will tell you things of this sort,"
then I should have betrayed your children's offspring.
16 When I pondered on this to discover its meaning,
it was difficult for my mind to fathom,
17 until I entered the Divine sanctuary:
then I saw what was destined for such people.

18 You have placed them in a precarious position;
You overthrow them and destroy them.
19 See how they perish in a moment of time,
swept away and consumed by calamity.
20 They are like a nightmare when one awakens, Lord;
one despises their ghostly forms when fully roused.
21 When I was worried,
and emotionally disturbed,
22 then I was stupid and thoughtless,
behaving just like an animal towards You.
23 Nevertheless, I am always in Your presence;
You have grasped me by my right hand.
24 You will direct me by your advice,
and afterwards receive me to an honored position.
25 Whom have I in heaven except You?
Besides You there is nothing on earth that I desire.
26 Though my body and my spirit may droop,
God is the source of my stability,
and my eternal choice.
27 See how those who forsake You meet their end:
You destroy all who stray from You.
28 For my own part,
it is to my advantage to approach God.
I will place my trust in the Lord God,
that I may tell of all Your works.

Psalm 74

1 Why are You forever rejecting us, Lord?
Why does Your anger fume against Your grazing flock?
2 Remember Your community which You acquired long ago;
the tribe which You ransomed formerly as Your inheritance.
Call to mind Mount Zion, which You have inhabited.
3 Go in the direction of the leveled ruins;
the enemy has devastated Your entire shrine.
4 Your foes behave rowdily in the center of Your sanctuary;
they have replaced our symbols with their own banners.
5 They made themselves known
as men who lifted up axes upon a clump of trees.

6 Now they have broken down all the carved work
with hammers and hatchets.
7 They set Your shrine on fire;
they desecrated Your holy abode,
leveling it to the ground.
8 They said to themselves,
"We will desolate them completely."
They burned down all the places for divine assembly in the land.
9 We no longer see our symbols:
the prophet has ceased to exist,
and there is no one among us who knows how long it will last.
10 How long will the enemy go on deriding, Lord?
Will the adversary always be reviling Your name?
11 Why do You restrain Your great power?
Release Your might from its confines
and annihilate them.
12 You, my God, have been my King for many years,
working deeds of deliverance amongst humanity.
13 It was You who divided the sea by Your power;
You shattered the heads of the crocodiles in the waters.
14 You crushed the power of Leviathan;
You divided him up as food for the sharks.
15 You opened up springs and brooks:
it was You who dried up perpetual torrents.
16 Both day and night belong to You:
You set the sun and moon in position.
17 You fixed all the boundaries of the earth;
it was You who made both summer and winter.
18 Bear this in mind, Lord, that the enemy has reviled You,
and an impious people has abused Your name.
19 Do not surrender the life of Your turtle dove to the wild beasts:
do not ignore indefinitely the existence of Your
impoverished people.
20 Respect the covenant,
for the far reaches of the land are full of disturbances.
21 Do not allow the afflicted to be shamed again;
let the poor and oppressed praise Your name.
22 Rise up, Lord, and vindicate Your cause;
remember how the impious revile You all day long.

23 Do not ignore the clamor of Your opponents,
the uproar of Your adversaries which arises continually.

Psalm 75

1 We are praising and thanking You, our God,
and those who supplicate You
are telling of Your wonderful doings.
2 "When the time is ripe,
I will judge in fairness.
3 "When the earth and all its inhabitants stagger about,
I support its undergirding."
4 I say to the arrogant,
"Do not be so overbearing,"
and to the godless,
"Do not exaggerate your abilities.
5 "Do not flaunt your power,
nor speak with wanton presumption."
6 Exaltation comes
not from the east or west,
nor from the wilderness:
7 God himself is the Judge:
He deposes one and promotes another.
8 Within the Lord's dispensing power is a cup of destiny,
with fermenting wine, well mixed.
He pours from it:
and all the corrupt among humanity will drink it,
and drain it to the dregs.
9 I will rejoice forever,
singing praises to the God of Jacob.
I will shatter the strength of the wicked,
but the power of the virtuous will be increased.

Psalm 76

1 God has revealed Himself in Judah:
His name is renowned in Israel.
2 His abode is in Salem,
His dwelling in Zion.

3 It was there that He broke the flashing arrows of the bow,
the shield and sword of battle.
4 You are resplendent,
more formidable than the mountain lairs of bandits.
5 The brave were plundered,
they passed into oblivion;
all the powerful warriors were thwarted.
6 At Your command, God of Jacob,
both rider and horse fell unconscious.
7 You are indeed terrifying;
who can stand in Your presence once You become angry?
8 You dispensed judgment from heaven;
earth became fearful and was silent,
9 when God arose to administer justice,
and save all the oppressed upon earth.
10 Even man in his fury will praise You;
You will adorn Yourself with the remnant of their anger.
11 Make your vows,
and discharge them to the Lord your God;
let all neighboring tribes bring gifts
to Him who inspires reverence:
12 who humbles the spirit of powerful leaders,
and who is a source of terror to earthly monarchs.

Psalm 77

1 I will raise my voice and cry loudly to God:
I will make my complaint to God,
that He may hear me.
2 When trouble overtook me, I sought the Lord;
my hands were extended in the night tirelessly,
and my mind refused consolation.
3 I remember this, my God, and groan:
I meditate, and my spirit becomes exhausted.
4 You keep me awake;
I am disturbed, and cannot talk.
5 I think over former days;
I recall years long past.

6 Snatches of music come to me in the night;
I turn things over in my mind, and ponder
in a spirit of enquiry:
7 "Will the Lord abandon me for ever?
Will He never again display kindness?
8 "Has His merciful love completely disappeared?
Have His decrees ceased for all time?
9 "Has the divine graciousness gradually declined,
or has He withheld His sympathy in anger?"
10 I also said,
"It is my misfortune that the power of the Most High
seems altered nowadays."
11 I will remember the achievements of the Lord,
for I recall Your wonders from former times.
12 I will meditate on all that You have done,
and ponder on Your glorious deeds.
13 Your ways are sublime, my God;
what deity is as great as the Lord?
14 You are the God who performs marvels:
You have displayed Your strength among the nations.
15 By Your power You ransomed Your people,
the offspring of Jacob and Joseph.
16 When the waters saw You, my God,
when the waters beheld You, they were convulsed;
the depths were disturbed.
17 The clouds poured down torrents,
the skies thundered out.
Your lightning flashed to and fro.
18 Your thunder sounded in the hurricane;
lightning illuminated the earth.
The ground shuddered and trembled.
19 Your way led through the sea;
Your path traversed deep waters,
but Your tracks remained concealed.
20 You guided Your people like a flock,
under the direction of Moses and Aaron.

Psalm 78

1 Listen, my people, to my instruction;
pay attention to what I am saying.
2 I will narrate a parable,
and tell of ancient lore,
3 which we have known traditionally,
which our forebears narrated to us.
4 We will not withhold it from their children,
but will relate it to future generations:
the marvelous works of the Lord,
His might, and the wonders which He performed.
5 He established a covenant with Jacob,
and instituted a law in Israel
which He commanded our forefathers to impart to their children,
6 that a succeeding generation might be acquainted with them;
that children yet unborn might grow up to instruct their offspring
7 to place their trust in God,
and not to forget the Divine workings,
but to observe His commandments.
8 So that they would not be like their predecessors,
a stubborn and refractory generation,
thoroughly unreliable, and disloyal in their attitude towards God.
9 The Ephraimites, armed with bows,
retreated in the time of battle.
10 They did not keep the divine covenant,
and refused to honor the obligations of His laws.
11 They forgot His works
and the wonders which He had shown them.
12 He wrought miracles in the presence of their fathers,
in the land of Egypt, in the locality of Zoan.
13 He parted the sea and let them pass through,
and made the water stand up like a mound.
14 During the day He led them by means of a cloud,
and all the night with a fiery light.
15 He split rocks in the desert
and provided abundant water for them,
as from the great depths.

16 He also produced running streams from rock,
making water flow down like rivers.
17 Yet they kept on sinning against Him,
and rebelling against the Most High in the desert.
18 Then they tempted God by means of their desires,
demanding the food for which they craved.
19 They disparaged God by saying,
"Is it possible for God to set a table in the desert?"
20 "He has split rock, so that torrents have flooded out,
and streams have overflowed;
but can He also provide bread,
or furnish meat for His people?"
21 When the Lord heard this He became angry,
and fire flared out against Jacob.
His anger mounted against Israel,
22 because they placed no faith in God,
and did not trust Him for liberation.
23 Then He commanded the sky above,
and opened the floodgates of heaven.
24 He let manna fall upon them like rain for food,
and gave them heavenly bread.
25 Man ate the food of the mighty;
God sent them plenty of nourishment.
26 He released the east wind in the skies,
and by His power brought forth the south wind,
27 and showered flesh upon them like dust,
and winged birds like the sand of the sea.
28 He let them fall in the middle of their camp,
around their dwellings.
29 They ate, and were satisfied,
for He brought them that for which they craved.
30 But before they were completely satisfied,
while the food was still in their mouths,
31 the fierce anger of God came upon them,
and He made havoc of their well-fed company,
striking down the flower of Israelite youth.
32 Despite all this, they sinned still more,
and did not believe in His great works.
33 Consequently, He made their days disappear like an illusion,
and their years to terminate in ruin.

34 When He devastated them, they resorted to Him;
they repented, and sought God in earnest.
35 They recalled that God was their sure foundation,
and that the Most High was their Redeemer.
36 In their speech they praised Him,
and lied to Him with their tongue.
37 In their hearts they were untrue to Him,
and were disloyal to His covenant.
38 Yet He in mercy forgave their sin,
and did not destroy them,
39 though He frequently restrained His anger,
and did not give vent to His fury.
40 For he remembered that they were only human;
a puff of wind which passes and does not return.
41 How often they rebelled against Him in the desert,
and grieved Him in the wilderness.
42 They tempted God again and again,
and irritated the Holy One of Israel.
43 They did not remember His power,
nor the occasion when He delivered them from the enemy,
44 when He showed portents to the Egyptians,
and omens in the field of Zoan.
45 He transformed their rivers into blood,
so that they could not drink from their streams.
46 He sent swarms of flies among them and devoured them,
and frogs, which destroyed them.
47 He allotted their produce to the caterpillar,
and the fruit of their toil to the locust.
48 He killed off their vines with hailstones,
and their sycamore trees with frost.
49 He abandoned their cattle to the hail,
and their flocks to the plague.
50 In His fierce anger he sent upon them fury,
wrath and distress;
a flood of destructive powers.
51 He blazed a trail for His anger,
He did not spare them from destruction,
but abandoned them to the plague.
52 He killed all the firstborn in Egypt,
the male first-fruits in the tents of Ham.

53 He led His people out like a flock,
guiding them like a herd in the desert.
54 He conducted them safely so that they were not afraid;
but the sea engulfed their enemies.
55 He brought them to His sacred land,
to the mountain which His great power had acquired.
56 He drove out the nations before them,
and allotted tracts of land,
settling the Israelite tribes in their dwellings.
57 Still they tempted and provoked God Most High,
and did not observe His precepts.
58 Like their forebears they digressed and behaved treacherously,
deceiving like an unreliable bow.
59 They irritated Him with their sanctuaries,
and infuriated Him with their images.
60 God observed this, and became angry;
He thoroughly detested Israel.
61 He abandoned His habitation at Shiloh,
the sanctuary which He had occupied among men.
62 He allowed His emblem of strength to be taken as booty,
delivering His glory into enemy keeping.
63 He surrendered His people to the sword,
and fumed against His inheritance.
64 Fire consumed their young men,
and their maidens had no marriage celebrations.
Their priests fell by the sword,
and their widows did not lament.
65 Then, like a powerful man overcome with wine,
the Lord awakened as from sleep,
66 and routed His enemies,
making them a perpetual disgrace.
67 He disowned the house of Joseph,
and did not select the tribe of Ephraim.
68 But He chose the tribe of Judah,
and Mount Zion, which He loved.
69 He built His sanctuary like the lofty hills;
like the earth which He has established forever.
70 He has chosen David as His servant,
taking him away from the sheepfolds.

71 From tending mother-ewes He brought him
to nurture His people Jacob,
and Israel His heritage.
72 He shepherded them in sincerity,
and guided them with His capable hands.

Psalm 79

1 The heathen have come into Your inheritance, my God,
they have polluted Your holy temple,
and have made Jerusalem a ruined heap.
2 They have given your servants' corpses to the birds of the air
as food,
and the flesh of Your saints to the beasts of the earth.
3 They have poured their blood out like water around Jerusalem,
and there is nobody to bury them.
4 We have become contemptible to our neighbors;
mocked and ridiculed by those around us.
5 How much longer, Lord God?
Will You continue to be angry indefinitely?
Will Your resentment flare up like fire?
6 Loose Your anger on the heathen who do not acknowledge You,
and upon the kingdoms which do not invoke Your name.
7 For they have consumed Jacob,
and have devastated his dwelling.
8 Do not recall the iniquities of our forebears to our detriment.
Let Your sympathy overtake us quickly,
for our need is most urgent.
9 Help us, our saving God, on account of Your glorious name;
rescue us, and pardon our sins for Your name's sake.
10 Why should the heathen say,
"Where is their God?"
May there be manifested before our very eyes
due revenge upon the nations for the blood of your servants
that has been shed.
11 Let the groaning of the prisoner reach You;
preserve by Your great power those doomed to death.
12 Repay our neighbors seven times over for their mockery
with which they have flouted You, Lord.

13 So then we Your people, Your grazing flock,
will praise You perpetually;
we will proclaim Your praise to all generations.

Psalm 80

1 Pay attention, Shepherd of Israel:
You have led Joseph like a flock,
and sit enthroned among the heavenly hierarchy;
manifest yourself.
2 In the presence of Ephraim and Manasseh,
exert Your might, and come to our aid.
3 Restore us, our God;
bestow Your favor upon us, that we may be saved.
4 Lord God of armies,
how long will You be angry with Your praying people?
5 You have fed them with the bread of tears,
and caused them to drink deeply of weeping.
6 You have made us the ridicule of our neighbors,
and our enemies deride us.
7 Restore us, God of armies;
bestow Your favor on us, that we may be saved.
8 You pulled a vine up from Egypt;
You uprooted nations, and planted it.
9 You tidied up the ground for it,
and taking deep root, it filled the land.
10 Mountains were concealed by its shadow,
and the sacred cedars with its branches.
11 It put out its shoots as far as the sea,
and its branches stretched out to the river.
12 Why, then, have You broken down its fences,
so that all who pass by pluck off its fruit?
13 The wild hog gnaws at it,
and the animals of the field feed upon it.
14 Return, God of armies,
take notice, I beg, from heaven;
look, and take pity on this vine,
15 the shoot which You Yourself have planted,
the stock which You were developing for Your own.

16 It is burned with fire, it is uprooted;
may they perish when Your pleasure is manifested.
17 Bestow Your power upon man,
Your sovereign might upon the offspring which You have raised up for Yourself.
18 Then we will never stray from You;
revive us, and we will pray to Your name.
19 Lord God of armies, restore us:
bestow Your favor upon us, that we may be saved.

Psalm 81

1 Sing joyfully of our mighty God.
Shout aloud to the God of Jacob.
2 Let the music crescendo;
beat the tambourine,
play the soothing harp and the lyre.
3 Sound the trumpet at the new moon,
and at the day of our festival, when the moon is full.
4 This is a custom in Israel,
a decree of the God of Jacob.
5 He made it a law for Joseph,
when He marched against the land of Egypt.
I heard an unfamiliar voice saying,
6 "I have removed the burden from his shoulder;
his hands were released from carrying the heavy basket.
7 "You called Me when you were in trouble, and I liberated you;
I answered you from the recesses of the thundercloud;
I put you to the test at the waters of Meribah.
8 "Listen, My people, while I give you due warning:
if only you will pay attention to Me, people of Israel,
9 "there will not be one foreign deity among you,
nor will you be subservient to pagan gods.
10 "I am the Lord your God
who brought you up from the land of Egypt;
make your requests without limit,
and and I will accede to them all."
11 But My people paid no attention to what I said;
Israel declined My offer.

12 So I have abandoned them to their obstinacy;
they have followed their own inclinations.
13 If only My people would listen to Me;
if Israel would only follow My directions,
14 I would subdue their enemies quickly,
and focus My power on their opponents.
15 Those who hate the Lord God would cower before him,
and their destiny would be fixed forever.
16 He would feed them with the best wheat,
and nourish them with honey gathered from the rocks.

Psalm 82

1 God stands up in the divine assembly:
in the midst of the judges He gives judgment,
2 "How long will you judge evilly,
and uphold the purpose of the wicked?
3 "Dispense justice to the needy and orphaned;
uphold the rights of the oppressed and destitute.
4 "Deliver the needy and poor,
and rescue them from the power of the tyrant.
5 "They have neither knowledge nor discernment;
they walk around in bewilderment.
All the foundations of the earth tremble.
6 "I was the one to say that you should be as God:
all of you the kin of the Most High.
7 "But you shall die like mortal men,
and succumb like any other noble person."
8 Stand up, Lord God, to dispense justice on earth,
for You are the possessor of all nations.

Psalm 83

1 Do not remain silent, Lord God;
do not show indifference, or refrain from activity.
2 See, Your enemies are causing a tumult;
those who hate You have become haughty.
3 They have made ingenious plans against Your people,
and they plot together against those whom You protect:

4 "Come" they say,
"let us end their existence as a nation,
that the name of Israel may be remembered no longer."
5 They conspire with one objective in view,
and form an alliance against You.
6 They comprise the Edomite dwelling, and the Ishmaelites,
Moab and the Hagarines,
7 Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek,
Philistia, and the inhabitants of Tyre.
8 Assyria also is in league with them;
they constitute the military backing of Lot's descendants.
9 Treat them like You did Midian;
like Sisera and Jabin at the River Kishon,
10 who were destroyed at Endor,
becoming corpses on the ground.
11 Make their nobility like Oreb and Zeeb.
and all their leaders like Zebah and Zalmunnah,
12 who said,
"Let us capture the divine possessions for ourselves."
13 Make them, my God, like the blown chaff,
like stubble in the presence of wind.
14 As fire devastates the forest,
and as a flame sets hills on fire.
15 follow them relentlessly by Your storm,
and terrify them by Your tornado.
16 Make them thoroughly shamefaced,
that they may search You out, Lord.
17 Let them be disgraced
and live in continual terror.
May they disappear in utter discredit,
18 that people may realize that You alone, Lord,
are supreme over all the earth.

Psalm 84

1 How lovely Your dwelling is,
Lord God of armies.
2 My soul longs and yearns for the shrines of the Lord;
my mind and body shout for joy to the living God.

3 Even the sparrow has found a home,
and the wild pigeon a nest for herself
in which she can keep her fledglings,
4 namely, at Your altars, Lord God of armies,
my King and God.
5 All who live in Your dwelling are happy indeed,
singing Your praises continually.
6 Those who find their inspiration in You are fortunate
in having Your interests at heart.
7 As they pass through the valley of weeping,
they transform it into a region of springs.
8 They increase in strength,
until God is manifested in Zion.
9 Lord God of armies, hear my prayer;
pay attention, God of Jacob.
10 We implore You, our God,
to look and favor Your anointed one.
11 For one day in Your abode
is better than a thousand elsewhere.
I would prefer to remain at the threshold of the divine dwelling
than to reside in the house of corruption.
12 For the Lord God is a towering protection;
He bestows goodness and honor.
He does not withhold prosperity from those who live blamelessly.
13 Lord God of armies,
how happy is the one who trusts in You.

Psalm 85

1 You have been considerate toward Your land, Lord:
You have restored the fortunes of Jacob.
2 You have forgiven the wrongdoing of Your people,
and have pardoned all their sin.
3 You have abandoned all Your anger,
and put aside Your fierce fury.
4 Return unto us, our saving God;
let Your displeasure with us cease.
5 Will You be angry with us forever?
Will You prolong Your fury indefinitely?

6 Will You not rather revive us once more,
that Your people may behave gratefully towards You?
7 Show us Your loving concern, Lord,
and favor us with speedy release.
8 Let me hear what God the Lord will say:
surely He will assure His people and His saints of peace,
if only they do not return to foolishness.
9 His deliverance is near indeed to those who revere Him;
renown will make her abode in our country.
10 Loving mercy will encounter fidelity;
righteousness and peace will embrace.
11 Truth will spring up from the earth,
and equity will look down from heaven.
12 The Lord will indeed bestow prosperity,
and our land will yield its produce.
13 Righteousness will precede it,
marking the way with its tracks.

Psalm 86

1 Pay attention, Lord, and answer me,
for I am oppressed and wretched.
2 Keep me secure, for I am a godly person.
Since You are my God,
save Your servant who is trusting in You.
3 Show me Your favor, Lord,
for I entreat You all day long.
4 Bring gladness into the life of Your servant,
for I dedicate myself to You, Lord.
5 For You are good, Lord, and forgiving:
You display abundant love to all who appeal to You.
6 Pay attention, Lord, to my prayer,
and listen to my imploring voice.
7 In the time of my misfortune I will invoke You,
for You will answer me.
8 Among the deities there is none like You, Lord;
there is nothing to compare with Your mighty deeds.
9 All those nations which You have formed
will come and do homage to You, Lord,
and will honor Your name,

10 for You are pre-eminent.
You work wonders: You are God alone.
11 Give me insight into Your ways, Lord,
I will behave loyally toward You.
May my life be centered upon reverence to Your name.
12 I will praise You, my Lord and God, with my whole being,
and I will honor Your name for ever.
13 For the loving sympathy which You have shown me is immense;
You have liberated me from the recesses of the world beyond.
14 My God, proud men have opposed me;
an unscrupulous group desires to kill me,
and does not keep You in mind.
15 But You, Lord, are a sympathetic and gracious God;
patient, extremely kind and faithful.
16 Confront me and pity me;
strengthen Your servant and rescue Your handmaid's son.
17 Show me a heartening sign,
that those who hate me may also see it, and be ashamed,
because You, Lord, have assisted me, and been my comfort.

Psalm 87

1 It is founded on the sacred hill,
2 The Lord loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
3 Marvelous things have been said in praise of you,
city of God.
4 I will mention Rahab and Babylon
as included among those acquainted with me;
look at Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia,
"This one was born there."
5 It will also be said of Zion,
"Such and such were born there."
The Most High himself will establish her.
6 The Lord will record it as He enrolls the nations,
"This one was born there."
7 Singers and musicians chant together,
"All my fountains spring from You."

Psalm 88

1 Lord, my saving God,
I have cried for help day and night to You.
2 Let my prayer come before You;
pay attention to my entreaty,
3 for I am full of trouble,
and I am on the verge of the world beyond.
4 I am included among those destined for the grave;
I am just like one whose strength is sapped.
5 Released from life's violence among the dead,
like the slain who lie in the grave.
Whom You do not remember any more,
for they are cut off from Your assistance.
6 You have placed me in the remotest chasm,
in deep, dark shadows.
7 Your anger lies heavily upon me;
You have surged over me with all your breakers.
8 You have caused my friends to shun me;
You have made me revolting to them.
I am hemmed in so that I cannot escape.
9 My sight is degenerating through sorrow;
I have entreated You daily, Lord,
and stretched out my hands to You.
10 Will you perform miracles for the dead?
Will the departed arise to praise You?
11 Is Your divine grace talked of in the grave?
Or Your faithfulness in the world beyond?
12 Are Your wonders acknowledged in regions of darkness?
Or Your righteousness in the land of oblivion?
13 Yet I cry for aid to You, Lord;
my prayer comes to You in the morning.
14 Why do you spurn me, Lord,
and conceal Yourself from me?
15 Ever since I was young I have been oppressed, and at the point
of death.
I have endured Your terrors; I am benumbed.
16 Your fiery anger has swept over me;
Your horrors have left me stunned.

17 Daily they surround me, like water,
and hem me in completely.
18 You have made admirer and friend alike
stand aloof from me;
obscurity is my only companion.

Psalm 89

1 I will sing perpetually of the mercies of the Lord;
I will tell of Your fidelity through all generations.
2 For I have said,
"Your loving mercy is established forever;
Your loyalty is as reliable as the very heavens."
3 I entered into an agreement with My chosen one:
I swore solemnly to David My servant,
4 "I will establish your descendants for all time,
and build up your dynasty for all ages."
5 Let the heavens praise Your wonders, Lord,
and Your fidelity in the divine conclave.
6 For who in the heavens may compare with the Lord?
Who is like the Lord among the deities?
7 He is a God to be feared in the holy council;
formidable and awe-inspiring to all around Him.
8 Lord God of armies,
who is as powerful as You, Lord?
Your fidelity extends all around You.
9 You control the raging sea:
when its waves tower, You restrain them.
10 It was You who tramped on Rahab as on some profane thing;
by Your mighty power You dispersed Your enemies.
11 The skies are Yours, the earth also is Your property;
You have founded the world, and all it contains.
12 You have created the north and the south:
Tabor and Hermon praise Your name.
13 You are possessed with formidable strength:
Your activity is vigorous, Your resources immense.
14 Righteousness and justice are the basis of Your sovereignty.
Divine mercy and truth precede You.
15 Happy indeed are the people who recognize the festal call, Lord,
who go about radiant with Your presence.

16 They rejoice in Your name daily,
and are exalted through Your righteousness.
17 For You are their glorious strength;
by Your favor our power is increased,
18 because our protection comes from the Lord,
and our king from the Holy One of Israel.
19 You once addressed Your devoted servant in a vision, saying,
"I have placed a youth above the mighty man;
I have raised up a young man over the people."
20 "I have chosen David as My servant,
and have anointed him with holy oil.
21 "My power will sustain him,
My might will strengthen him.
22 "The enemy will not assail him,
nor will the wicked oppress him,
23 "for I will shatter his foes in his presence,
and will strike down those who hate him.
24 "My fidelity and loving mercy shall accompany him,
and through My name his prestige shall increase.
25 "I will put the sea on one hand,
and the river on the other.
26 "And he will entreat me,
You are my Father, my God, my sure deliverance.
27 "I will make him pre-eminent,
the highest amongst earthly monarchs.
28 "I will maintain My loving mercy for him perpetually,
and My covenant with him will be permanent.
29 "I will establish his succession forever;
his dynasty will be as stable as heaven.
30 "If his sons renounce My law,
and do not follow My decisions:
31 "if they violate My enactments,
and do not observe My injunctions,
32 "then I will punish their transgressions with the rod,
and their iniquity with blows.
33 "But I will not withdraw My loving compassion,
nor be false to My assurances.
34 "I will not infringe My agreement,
nor revoke what I have promised,

35 "once I have sworn solemnly
that I will not play falsely with David.
36 "His succession will endure forever;
his dynasty will be like the sun before me.
37 "It shall be permanently established like the moon,
and be as enduring as the skies."
38 Yet You have spurned, rejected,
and have become angry with Your anointed.
39 You have nullified Your covenant with Your servant,
and have defiled his crown in the dust.
40 You have broken down all his defenses,
and laid his fortifications in ruins.
41 All who pass by rob him;
he is the joke of the neighborhood.
42 You have increased the power of his assailants,
and given his rivals cause for rejoicing.
43 You have blunted the edge of his sword,
and have not supported him in battle.
44 You have terminated his regal splendor,
and cast his throne down to the ground.
45 You have shortened his youthful days,
and have covered him with disgrace.
46 How long will You conceal Yourself, Lord?
Will Your anger smoulder like fire forever?
47 Bear in mind my life-span;
remember to what end You have created human society.
48 Who is the man that can live and not experience death?
and that can rescue his soul from the clutches of the
world beyond?
49 Where are Your former deeds of mercy, Lord,
which in Your fidelity You solemnly promised to David?
50 Remember, Lord, the disgrace of Your servant,
and how I bear within myself the abuse of many nations,
51 which Your enemies hurl, Lord,
and with which they revile Your anointed one
at every step.
52 May the Lord God be blessed forever.
Amen. Amen.

Psalm 90

1 Lord, You have been our shelter
in all ages.
2 Before the mountains were formed,
or the earth and the universe were created,
You existed as God eternal.
3 You bring mankind to a state of contrition, saying,
"Repent, offspring of man."
4 A thousand years are only as the passing of yesterday with You;
a mere period of the night.
5 You engulf them;
they are like a dream at dawn,
like grass in its development.
6 In the morning it flourishes and grows;
by evening it has faded and shriveled.
7 For we are swamped by Your fury,
and ruined by Your anger.
8 You bear our wrongdoing in mind,
in Your searching presence appear the things we would hide.
9 For our whole existence declines when You are angry;
our years terminate like a whisper.
10 The length of life is seventy years;
perhaps eighty, given good health.
Even so, their vigor is but travail and trouble;
they pass quickly, and we disappear.
11 Who is aware of the violence of Your fury?
Who stands in reverent awe of Your anger?
12 Teach us, then, how to interpret our existence,
so that we may acquire a discerning mind.
13 Change Your attitude, Lord;
how long will it be before You take pity on Your servants?
14 Satisfy us with Your sympathetic love at dawning,
so that we may shout and rejoice all our lives.
15 Make us happy for the same length of time
as that in which You have afflicted us;
to compensate for those years in which we experienced hardship.
16 May Your work be evident to all Your servants,
and Your majesty to their children.

17 May the favor of the Lord our God rest upon us.
Safeguard that which we try to do;
establish our handiwork.

Psalm 91

1 He who lives as a ward of the Most High
shall repose under the protection of the Almighty.
2 I will say of the Lord,
"You are my sheltering haven; my God whom I trust."
3 For He will rescue you from the snare of the hunter,
and from the deadly epidemic.
4 He will safeguard you with His strength,
and you will find shelter within His protecting power.
His fidelity is your assurance of security.
5 You will not need to be afraid of any nocturnal terror,
nor of any danger that is abroad in daylight:
6 neither the plague that stalks at dead of night,
nor the epidemic which devastates at midday.
7 A thousand will fall at your side,
and a myriad at your right hand,
but it will not approach you.
8 You will need only to take careful notice,
to see how the wicked are punished.
9 Because you have made the Lord your shelter,
and the Most High your protection,
10 no evil will overwhelm you;
no plague shall approach your dwelling.
11 For He will give His angels orders concerning you,
to safeguard you in all your enterprises.
12 By their power they will uphold you,
lest you should even injure your foot on a stone.
13 You will tread on the viper and adder:
you will trample down the lion and the dragon.
14 "Because he is devoted to Me, I will deliver him;
I will protect him,
because he acknowledges My name.
15 "He will entreat Me, and I will answer him;
I will be with him in hardship,
I will deliver him and honor him.

16 "He will have the satisfaction of a long life,
and I shall let him participate in My salvation."

Psalm 92

1 It is appropriate to give thanks to the Lord,
and to praise Your name in song, Most High.
2 To proclaim Your mercies in the morning,
and Your fidelity at night,
3 on the ten-stringed lyre and the lute;
to a melody on the harp.
4 For You have given me cause for rejoicing
through what You have done;
I burst into song
because of Your handiwork.
5 How majestic Your deeds are, Lord;
how profound are Your designs.
6 The stupid person is unable to appreciate it;
the dullard cannot comprehend this fact,
7 that when the wicked spring up like grass,
and all the wrongdoers blossom forth,
they are destined for ultimate destruction.
8 Whereas You, Lord, remain supreme forever.
9 Look at Your enemies, Lord God —
those who are Your opponents will be destroyed;
all the wicked will be dispersed.
10 But You have promoted me, so that I am like a powerful buffalo
I am anointed with fresh oil.
11 I have personally witnessed the downfall of my enemies;
I myself have heard the death knell of my wicked foes.
12 The upright man will flourish like the palm tree,
and will grow tall like the cedar in Lebanon.
13 Those who are planted in the shrine of the Lord
will blossom forth in the divine precincts.
14 In old age they will still be producing fruit;
they will be running freely with sap, and will be virile,
15 as a testimony to the rectitude of the Lord.
He is my sure defense:
there is no deficiency in Him.

Psalm 93

1 The Lord is ruling, arrayed in majesty.
The Lord is decked out and invested with power.
The universe has been established immovably.
2 Your sovereignty has been founded from old time;
You have existed eternally.
3 The rivers are swollen, Lord God;
the torrents have increased their thundering;
the floods have piled up their breakers.
4 Above the roar of mighty waters,
more majestic than the ocean billows,
is the Lord, gloriously supreme.
5 Your decrees are firmly established.
It is proper for Your shrine to be eternally sacred, Lord.

Psalm 94

1 Lord God of retribution,
avenging Deity, manifest Yourself.
2 Stand up, Judge of the world;
mete out retribution to the haughty.
3 As for the wicked, Lord,
how long will they continue to rejoice?
4 They blurt out arrogant words;
all the wrongdoers are boastful.
5 They oppress Your people, Lord,
and afflict Your inheritance.
6 They kill the widow and the stranger,
and murder the orphans.
7 And they assert,
"God does not see it; the God of Jacob ignores it."
8 Ponder on this, you dull-witted people:
when will you become wise, you dolts?
9 Is He who formed the hearing deaf?
Is He who constructed the eye blind?
10 Will not He who reprimands nations punish?
He who teaches mankind knowledge?
11 The Lord is aware
that the thoughts of men are idle things.

12 The man whom You reprove is indeed fortunate, Lord,
and him whom You instruct from Your law
13 not to be worried when adversity threatens,
until a trap is set for the wrongdoers.
14 For the Lord will not abandon His people;
He will not relinquish His inheritance.
15 The righteous will receive justice,
and the virtuous will succeed to it.
16 Who will take his stand for me against the wrongdoers?
Who will arise on my behalf against the iniquitous?
17 If the Lord had not assisted me,
I would have succumbed to death quickly.
18 When I said,
"My feet are slipping,"
Your loving mercy sustained me.
19 When my mind is burdened with worry,
Your comforting encourages me.
20 Has the wicked sovereign become Your ally,
who legislates misery by his laws?
21 They fall upon the righteous person,
and condemn the innocent to death.
22 But the Lord has become my defense,
and my God is my sure refuge.
23 Who will repay them for their sin,
and destroy them for their iniquity?
The Lord our God will obliterate them.

Psalm 95

1 Come, let us sing joyously to the Lord;
let us shout for joy to our saving defense.
2 Let us approach Him with praise,
and sing jubilantly with hymns of thanks.
3 For the Lord is a majestic Deity;
a King supreme over all other gods.
4 Under His control are the recesses of the earth,
and the towering mountains belong to Him.
5 The sea is His, for he formed it;
His power molded the dry land.

6 Come, let us worship and prostrate ourselves:
let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.
7 For He is our God,
and we are His grazing flock, His own sheep.
Would that you might hear Him speaking today,
8 "Do not behave obstinately, as at Meribah,
or at Massah, on that occasion in the desert
9 "when your forebears doubted Me,
putting Me to the test,
though they had witnessed My doings.
10 "I abhorred that generation for forty long years, and said,
'They are an aberrant people, who do not acknowledge
My ways.'
11 "So I swore solemnly in My anger,
that they should not enter My land of rest."

Psalm 96

1 Sing a new song to the Lord;
let all the earth sing to the Lord God.
2 Praise the Lord, and bless His name;
proclaim His deliverance from day to day.
3 Tell of His glory to the nations,
and His wonders among all races.
4 For the Lord is majestic, and most praiseworthy;
He is to be feared above all deities.
5 For the gods of pagan nations are idols,
but the Lord formed the heavens.
6 His presence is one of splendor and majesty;
praise and glory are found in his shrine.
7 Give to the Lord, you families of peoples,
give to the Lord glory and power.
8 Ascribe to the Lord the eminence due to His name:
bring an offering, and enter His shrine.
9 Worship the Lord with a sanctified spirit;
let all the earth stand in awe of Him.
10 Proclaim among the nations that the Lord is King:
that He has established the world immovable;
He judges people equitably.

11 Let the heavens rejoice, let earth be exultant;
let the sea and all its contents roar.
12 Let the land and all that is in it be joyful,
then all the trees in the forest will shout aloud
13 in the presence of the Lord,
as He comes to dispense justice on earth.
He will judge the world with justice,
and the peoples impartially.

Psalm 97

1 The Lord is supreme; let the earth rejoice,
let the distant shores be glad.
2 Clouds and darkness surround Him;
righteousness and justice are the basis of His sovereignty.
3 Fire precedes Him,
and burns up His enemies who surround Him.
4 His lightning illuminated the universe;
the earth saw it and trembled.
5 The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the Lord,
when the Lord of the universe was in attendance.
6 The heavens proclaim His justice,
and all nations can see His glory.
7 All who venerate images are disgraced
for being proud of worthless idols.
All deities do homage unto Him.
8 Zion has heard, and is delighted;
the towns of Judah rejoice at Your decrees, Lord.
9 For You, Lord, are supreme over all the earth;
You are elevated far above all other deities.
10 Hate evil, you who love the Lord;
for He preserves the lives of His saints,
rescuing them from the clutches of the wicked.
11 Light has dawned for the virtuous,
and joy has come to the morally upright.
12 Rejoice in the Lord, you righteous,
and give thanks to His holy name.

Psalm 98

1 Sing a new song to the Lord,
for He has performed marvels.
His great power and supreme strength have achieved victory for Him.
2 The Lord has proclaimed His triumph;
in the presence of the nations He has made evident His
righteousness.
3 He has remembered His loving mercies and fidelity
to the house of Israel;
the remote bounds of earth have seen the victory of our God.
4 Let all the earth shout for joy to the Lord;
rejoice, be exultant, and sing praises.
5 Sing praises to the Lord with the lyre,
with the harp, and with melodious music.
6 With a fanfare of trumpets and horns,
shout aloud in the presence of the Lord and King.
7 Let the sea and its contents roar;
the world, and all who live in it.
8 Let the rivers join in the applause;
let the mountains also rejoice in the presence of the Lord,
9 for He is coming to give judgment upon earth.
10 He will judge the world righteously,
and the nations impartially.

Psalm 99

1 The Lord is sovereign; let pagan nations tremble.
He is enthroned in heaven; let the earth quake.
2 The Lord is majestic in Zion,
and supreme over all races.
3 Let them praise Your pre-eminent and venerable name, saying,
"He is holy."
4 Mighty monarch, lover of justice,
You have established equity.
You have exacted justice and fairness for Jacob.
5 Exalt the Lord our God,
and do homage at His footstool.
He is holy.

6 Moses and Aaron were numbered amongst His priests,
and Samuel was one of those who invoked His name.
When they called upon the Lord, He answered them.
7 He used to converse with them from the column of cloud;
they observed His injunctions, and the statutes which
He gave them.
8 It was You, our Lord and God, who answered them:
You became a forgiving Deity to them,
whilst still exacting punishment for their wrongdoing.
9 Exalt the Lord our God;
do homage at His sacred mountain,
for the Lord our God is holy.

Psalm 100

1 Let all the earth shout for joy to the Lord.
2 Serve the Lord with gladness,
enter His presence with singing.
3 Acknowledge the Lord as God:
He has made us, we are His —
His people, His grazing flock.
4 Enter His gates with rejoicing,
and His precincts with praise.
Give Him thanks. Bless His name.
5 For the Lord is good:
His loving mercy is eternal,
and His fidelity is of infinite duration.

Psalm 101

1 I will sing of mercy and justice;
I will sing to You, Lord.
2 I will give good heed to virtuous conduct;
when will You come to me?
I will live an exemplary life in my own home.
3 I will not have anything unworthy in my presence:
dissolute behavior is odious to me;
it shall not gain a hold on me.
4 An evil mind will be a thing utterly remote from me;
I shall have no dealings with wrongdoing.

5 I will destroy
the man who maligns his friend secretly.
I cannot tolerate
the supercilious and haughty person.
6 I will concentrate my attention on the faithful in the land,
that they may remain my allies.
He who follows the path of moral uprightness shall serve me.
7 The man who practices guile
shall not reside in my household;
the liar shall not continue in my presence.
8 I will eradicate the wicked from the land continually,
rooting out from the city of the Lord
all the wrongdoers.

Psalm 102

1 Listen to my prayer, Lord,
and let my cry for aid reach You.
2 Do not conceal Yourself from me in my hour of distress:
give me Your full attention,
and answer me quickly at the time when I call.
3 For my days vanish like smoke,
and my bones are charred like a burnt stick.
4 My mind is dulled and withered like grass;
I am wasted away too much even to eat my food.
5 Because of my prolonged grieving
I have become skin and bone.
6 I resemble a vulture from the wilderness;
I am like an owl among ruins.
7 I lie awake;
I am like a solitary bird upon the roof.
8 My enemies insult me incessantly;
those who ridicule me use my name in oaths.
9 For I have eaten ashes with my bread,
and have mixed my drink with weeping
10 on account of Your furious anger,
for You lifted me up, and then tossed me away.
11 My days are like a declining shadow,
and I am withered like grass.

12 But You, Lord, exist eternally:
Your renown endures throughout the ages.
13 You will arise and take pity upon Zion;
for it is time to treat her graciously,
the appointed hour has come.
14 For Your servants cherish her ruins,
and show affection for her dust.
15 The nations will revere the name of the Lord,
and all the earthly monarchs will acknowledge His glory.
16 When the Lord has rebuilt Zion,
He will manifest Himself in His splendor.
17 He will respond to the entreaty of the destitute,
and will not spurn their prayer.
18 Let this be recorded for future ages,
that a people yet unborn may praise the Lord.
19 For He looked down from His sacred elevation:
from the heavens the Lord gazed down to earth,
20 to hear the groans of the imprisoned,
to set free those doomed to die.
21 that the name of the Lord might be proclaimed in Zion,
and His praise in Jerusalem,
22 when peoples and kingdoms assemble there
to serve the Lord.
23 He has sapped my developing strength,
and diminished my days.
24 "Do not take me away, my God" I cry,
"in my middle age:
for Your existence goes on for all generations.
25 "In olden times You laid the foundations of the earth,
and the heavens are Your handiwork.
26 "Though they perish, You will remain;
they will all deteriorate like a garment;
You will change them like clothing, and they will be discarded,
27 "but You are always the same,
and Your years know no end.
28 "The children of Your servants will live in security;
their offspring shall be established before You."

Psalm 103

1 Bless the Lord, my soul;
 let my innermost being praise His holy name.
2 Bless the Lord, my soul,
 and do not forget all His beneficence.
3 He forgives all your wrongdoing,
 and heals all your diseases.
4 He rescues you from destruction,
 and adorns you with mercy and favor.
5 He satisfies your desire for good things,
 so that your youth is renewed like that of the eagle.
6 The Lord exacts justice and equity
 for all those who are oppressed.
7 He manifested His ways to Moses,
 and His dealings to the offspring of Israel.
8 The Lord is merciful and benign,
 patient, and filled with compassionate love.
9 He will not reprimand continually,
 nor harbor resentment forever.
10 He has not treated us according to our wrongdoing,
 nor repaid us in proportion to our wickedness.
11 But high as the heaven above the earth
 is the extent of His love to those who venerate Him.
12 As far as the east is from the west
 is the distance to which He has removed our sins from us.
13 Just as a father has pity upon his children,
 so the Lord is merciful to those who revere Him.
14 For He is aware of our constitution;
 He recalls that we are only dust.
15 Human existence is like grass;
 man blossoms forth like a flower in the field.
16 When the wind sweeps over it, it has disappeared;
 the place where it was never sees it again.
17 But the loving mercy of the Lord
 is eternally present to those who revere Him,
 and His equity avails for future generations,
18 for those who observe His covenant,
 and remember to keep His enactments.

19 The Lord has established His sovereignty in the heavens;
His rule holds sway over all.
20 Bless the Lord, you who are His angels;
powerful beings, who execute His commands,
and listen to His utterances.
21 Bless the Lord, you who constitute His armies,
to attend on him to perform His will.
22 May all His works bless the Lord
in every place where His sway extends.
Bless the Lord, my soul.

Psalm 104

1 Bless the Lord, my soul:
You are most majestic, my Lord and God;
You are adorned with honor and splendor,
2 covering Yourself with a robe of light,
and stretching out the skies like a tent covering.
3 He has laid the foundation of His dwelling on the waters;
He makes the clouds His chariot,
and soars on wings of wind.
4 He makes the winds His messengers;
His agencies are flaming fires.
5 He established the earth on its foundations,
so that it should never be disturbed.
6 You covered it with the garment of the ocean;
the waters towered above the mountains.
7 At Your reprimand they retreated;
they took to flight at Your loud thunderings.
8 The mountains rose, the valleys sank down
to the positions which You had planned for them.
9 You set them a limit which they were not to transgress,
that they should never again cover the earth.
10 You made springs flow in the valleys,
wending their ways through the hills.
11 They provide water for all the animals of the countryside;
and wild asses slake their thirst in them.
12 Near them live the birds of the sky;
they trill their notes from among the branches.

13 You water the mountains from Your dwelling above;
as a result of Your labors the earth is satisfied.
14 You make grass grow for the cattle,
and fodder for the domesticated animals,
that man may produce sustenance from the earth,
15 and wine to cheer the human spirit,
making his face gleam more brightly than oil;
with bread also, to refresh the human body.
16 The trees of the Lord have sufficient water:
the cedars of Lebanon, which He planted.
17 The birds build their nests in them;
the stork makes its home in the cypresses.
18 The lofty mountains are for the wild goats,
and the rocks are a shelter for the jerboa.
19 He created the moon to mark the seasons;
the sun knows when it is time to set.
20 You make darkness come on, and night falls,
in which all the forest animals prowl around.
21 The young lions roar after prey,
seeking their food from God.
22 The sun rises, and they withdraw,
and lie down in their lairs.
23 Man goes out to his toil and labor,
until evening.
24 How numerous Your works are, Lord God.
You have formed all of them most wisely;
earth is replete with Your creatures.
25 There is the great wide sea,
containing countless moving creatures,
organisms great and small.
26 There the ships sail,
and Leviathan, which You have made to frolic in it.
27 All these are looking to You
to provide them their food at the proper time.
28 When You give it to them, they gather it up;
when You are generous, they are filled with good things.
29 When You hide, their existence is threatened.
When You take their life away, they die, and return to the dust.

30 At a command from You, they are created,
and You replenish the surface of the earth.
31 Let the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord God rejoice in His works.
32 When He contemplates the earth, it quakes;
when He touches the mountains, they belch forth smoke.
33 I will sing to the Lord while life lasts;
I will praise my God as long as I exist.
34 May my meditation please Him;
I will rejoice indeed in the Lord.
35 May sinners be swept off the earth,
and the wicked disappear forever.
Bless the Lord, my soul.
May God be praised.

Psalm 105

1 Give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name.
Proclaim His doings among the peoples.
2 Sing to Him, celebrate His praises,
speak of all His wonders.
3 Glory in His sacred name;
let the hearts of those who are searching for the Lord be joyful.
4 Search out the Lord and His power;
look for His presence continually.
5 Remember the wonders that He has performed;
His miracles and His spoken decrees,
6 you offspring of Abraham His servant,
you descendants of Jacob His chosen.
7 He is the Lord our God;
His decrees are universal.
8 He honors His covenant continually;
the bond which He enacted, for a thousand generations.
9 Which He covenanted with Abraham,
the solemn promise which was sworn also to Isaac.
10 He confirmed this to Jacob as a statute,
and unto Israel as a permanent agreement,
11 saying,
"To you will I give the land of Canaan as an inheritance."

12 At this time they were only few in number,
of very minor importance, and strange to the country.
13 When they wandered from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another,
14 He allowed no one to oppress them;
He even reprimanded kings on their account:
15 "Leave my anointed ones alone;
do not harm my prophets."
16 He sent famine upon the land,
He broke the very staff of life.
17 He dispatched a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who was sold into slavery.
18 They forced his feet into fetters;
his body was put in irons.
19 Until the time that his uttterances were actually fulfilled,
the promise of the Lord tested him severely.
20 The king sent and released him;
the overlord of nations let him go free.
21 He appointed him supervisor of his household,
and ruler over all his possessions,
22 that he might give orders to his officers at will,
and offer advice to his elders.
23 Then Israel came into Egypt,
and Jacob took up residence in the land of Ham.
24 The Lord increased the fertility of His people,
and made them more numerous than their enemies.
25 He changed their attitude to hatred of His people,
so that they behaved treacherously towards His servants.
26 He sent Moses His follower,
and Aaron, whom He had chosen.
27 They performed miracles in their midst,
and wonders in the land of Ham.
28 He sent darkness, so that it became pitch black;
still they revolted against what He had said.
29 He transformed their waters into blood,
and destroyed their fish.
30 Their land produced swarms of frogs;
they even entered the royal apartments.

31 He issued a command, and gadflies appeared,
and lice throughout their country.
32 He gave them hail instead of rain,
and lightning flashed throughout their land.
33 He attacked their vines and fig trees,
breaking down shrubs in their locality.
34 He issued an order, and locusts came,
winged locusts without number.
35 They ate up all the vegetation in the land,
devouring the produce of their country.
36 He destroyed all the firstborn in their land,
the first-fruits of their virility.
37 Then He led them forth, loaded with silver and gold;
there were no stragglers among His tribes.
38 Egypt was relieved when they left,
for apprehension had overtaken them.
39 He spread out a cloud to screen them,
and fire to illuminate the night.
40 He brought them quails at their request,
and fed them with bread from the heavens.
41 He split the rock, and water gushed out;
it flowed through the desert like a river.
42 For He recalled His sacred promise
to Abraham His servant,
43 and He brought forth His people rejoicing;
His chosen ones were singing with joy.
44 He gave them the territory of the heathen,
and they reaped the reward of the nations' labors,
45 so that they might observe His injunctions,
and keep His laws.
May God be praised.

Psalm 106

1 May God be praised.
Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His loving mercies are eternal.
2 Who can recount the mighty deeds of the Lord,
or publish His praise in entirety?

3 Happy indeed are those who cherish equity,
who live virtuously all the time.
4 Remember me, Lord, when You are favoring Your people;
take account of me when You liberate them,
5 that I may observe the welfare of Your chosen ones,
and be glad when Your people are happy;
that I may rejoice along with Your inheritance.
6 We have sinned, as our forebears did;
we have done wrong, we have behaved wickedly.
7 When our fathers were in Egypt, they disregarded Your wonders;
they did not recall Your abundant mercy,
but defiled the Most High at the Red Sea.
8 Yet He saved them for the sake of His reputation,
that He might reveal His mighty power.
9 So He rebuked the Red Sea, and it became dry;
He guided them through the depths as through a desert.
10 Thus He freed them from the powerful enemy,
and rescued them from hostile might.
11 For the waters engulfed their enemies;
not one of them survived.
12 They believed His promise;
they sang His praise.
13 But they quickly forgot His doings;
they did not wait for His advice.
14 They experienced a wilful craving in the wilderness,
and tempted God in the desert.
15 So He gave them what they wanted,
but He sent a wasting disease amongst them.
16 When they became jealous of Moses in the encampment,
and of Aaron, who was consecrated to the Lord,
17 the ground split open and swallowed Dathan,
engulfing Abiram and his followers.
18 Fire burned up their group;
flames consumed the wicked.
19 They fashioned a calf in Horeb,
and worshiped a molten image.
20 They exchanged their glorious Deity
for the image of an ox that feeds on fodder.

21 They forgot God their deliverer,
who had performed miracles in Egypt:
22 marvelous deeds in the land of Ham,
and awe-inspiring acts at the Red Sea.
23 So He threatened to destroy them,
had not Moses, His chosen one, stood in the breach before
Him to avert His fury,
that He might not obliterate them.
24 After this, they regarded the pleasant land with contempt,
and had no confidence in His promise.
25 They grew discontented in their dwellings,
and did not obey the summons of the Lord.
26 So He vowed to them with raised hand,
that He would bring them to destruction in the desert,
27 and let their offspring be scattered among the nations,
dispersing them through many countries.
28 They associated themselves with the Baal of Peor,
and ate offerings devoted to the dead.
29 They incensed Him by their doings,
and a plague broke out among them.
30 Then Phineas stood up and intervened,
and the epidemic was checked.
31 For this he has been esteemed as righteous
unto all generations for ever.
32 Next, they annoyed Him at the waters of Meribah,
and Moses suffered embarrassment on their account,
33 because they had so embittered him
that he spoke impetuously.
34 They did not exterminate the pagans
as the Lord had instructed them,
35 but mingled with the nations,
and imitated their behavior.
36 They worshiped their idols,
and these became their undoing.
37 They even sacrificed their sons
and their daughters to demons,
38 and shed innocent blood —
the life blood of their sons and daughters,
whom they sacrificed to Canaanite idols,
defiling the land with blood.

39 Thus they became impure through their practices,
and immoral in their behavior.
40 Then the Lord was extremely angry with His people;
He detested his inheritance.
41 He delivered them into the power of the nations,
so that those who hated them were their overlords.
42 Their enemies oppressed them,
and they were subservient to their authority.
43 Many times He rescued them,
but they were obstinate in their opinions,
becoming demoralized by their wickedness.
44 But He took notice when they were in trouble,
on hearing their lament.
45 For their sake He remembered His covenant,
and in infinite kindness He relented.
46 He made them objects of sympathy
on the part of all their captors.
47 Deliver us, our Lord and God,
and assemble us from among the nations,
that we may praise Your holy name,
and rejoice as we adore You.
48 Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for all eternity,
and let all the people say,
"Amen. May God be praised."

Psalm 107

1 "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
his loving mercy is everlasting."
2 Let this be the declaration of the ransomed,
whom the Lord has rescued from hostile clutches,
3 and assembled from various lands,
from east and west, from north and south.
4 They roamed about in desert wastes,
finding no way to an inhabited city.
5 Hungry and thirsty,
their spirits sank.
6 Then in their distress they implored the Lord,
and He rescued them from their misfortune.
7 He guided them along a right road,
so that they reached an inhabited city.
8 Let them thank the Lord for His loving providence,
and His wonderful works to humanity.
9 For He satisfies the yearning spirit,
and fills the hungry heart with good.
10 There were those who were living in darkness and deep gloom;
prisoners in the irons of oppression.
11 because they rebelled against the Divine injunctions,
and rejected the advice of the Most High.
12 He lowered their spirits with affliction;
they stumbled, and there was no one to help.
13 When they entreated the Lord in their distress,
He rescued them from their misfortune.
14 He brought them out of darkness and deepest gloom,
and broke their fetters in pieces.
15 Let them thank the Lord for His loving providence,
and His wonderful works to humanity.
16 For He has broken down bronze doors,
cutting in pieces the iron bars.
17 The foolish were afflicted because of their wicked behavior,
and on account of their evil doings.
18 They detested every form of food,
and approached the gate of death.

19 When they appealed to the Lord,
He rescued them from their misfortune.
20 He issued a command, and healed them,
saving them from destruction.
21 Let them thank the Lord for His loving providence,
and His wonderful works to humanity.
22 Let them offer grateful sacrifices,
and recount His deeds in joyful song.
23 There were those who went down to the sea in ships,
engaging in business on mighty oceans.
24 These saw the works of the Lord,
and His wonders in the deep.
25 For He gave an order, and aroused the stormy wind,
which stirred up the ocean waves.
26 They towered to the sky, they sank down to the very depths;
in their danger their courage melted away.
27 Like a drunken man they reeled and staggered,
and were at their wits' end.
28 When they implored the Lord in their distress,
He rescued them from their misfortune.
29 He calmed the storm to a whisper,
and stilled its waves.
30 Then were they thankful for the abatement,
and He guided them to their desired harbor.
31 Let them thank the Lord for His loving providence,
and His wonderful works to humanity.
32 Let them exalt Him where people assemble,
and praise Him in the conclave of the elders.
33 He transforms rivers into waste land,
and flowing rivers into arid ground.
34 A productive area becomes a salt marsh,
because of the wickedness of its inhabitants.
35 He converts a desert into pools of water,
and parched land into a locality of springs.
36 There He settles the hungry,
and they establish an inhabited city.
37 They sow fields and plant vineyards,
that they may yield the fruits of harvest.
38 They became prolific by His blessing;
He does not allow their flocks to decrease.

39 When they themselves dwindled in numbers,
and were hard hit by oppression, misfortune and sorrow,
40 He poured contempt upon the nobility,
making them vagabonds in trackless wastes.
41 But He lifted the poor out of squalor,
and made their families like a flock.
42 The virtuous notice these things, and rejoice;
and all wickedness shall be silenced.
43 Whoever professes discernment,
let him pay attention to these things;
let him consider the gracious dealings of the Lord.

Psalm 108

1 My mind is resolute, my God;
I will sing and play music.
"Awake, my soul,
2 "awake, harp and lyre,
I will rouse the dawn.
3 "I will glorify You, Lord, among the peoples;
I will sing Your praises to pagan nations.
4 "For Your loving mercy transcends the heavens,
and Your fidelity extends to the skies.
5 "May You be praised, my God, to the heavens;
may Your glory cover the whole earth,
6 "in order that Your loved ones may be liberated:
give us victory by Your power, and respond to us."
7 God spoke in His shrine:
"I will divide up Shechem in triumph,
and apportion the valley of Succoth.
8 "Gilead is mine, Manasseh belongs to me.
Ephraim is my helmet,
Judah is my sovereign emblem.
9 "Moab is my wash basin;
upon Edom I toss my sandal.
I have shouted in triumph over Philistia."
10 Who will guide me to the fortified city?
Who will conduct me as far as Edom?
11 Had not You dispensed with us, my God?
At all events, You did not accompany our forces.

12 Give us assistance against the enemy;
human help is useless.
13 Through God we shall perform brave deeds;
He Himself will trample down our enemies.

Psalm 109

1 Do not remain mute, my praiseworthy God,
2 for wicked and deceitful utterances have been directed against me;
people have discussed me in untrue terms.
3 They have assailed me with hateful words;
they attack me without provocation.
4 They repay my love with enmity;
for my part I pray for them.
5 They have requited me evil for good,
and hatred for my affection.
6 Appoint an evil man as his overlord;
may an adversary stand at his side.
7 When he is to be judged, let him be condemned;
let his defence incriminate him.
8 Let his days be few in number;
let another take over his functions.
9 May his children be fatherless,
and his wife a widow.
10 Let his children be transients and beggars,
dispossessed from their hovels.
11 May the creditor seize all that he has;
may strangers squander his earnings.
12 May nobody extend kindness to him,
nor pity his orphaned offspring.
13 May his descendants be destroyed,
and their names obliterated in a succeeding generation.
14 May the wickedness of his forebears be remembered by the Lord;
let his mother's guilt remain unforgiven.
15 May the Lord keep them continually in mind,
and eradicate their memory from the earth,
16 because he did not remember to show kindness,
but hounded down the poor and oppressed,
and the brokenhearted, to death.

17 As he delighted in cursing, so let curses fall upon him;
because he disliked blessing, let it remain isolated from him.
18 He covered himself with cursing as with clothing;
and it entered into him like water,
and became as the marrow of his bones.
19 Let it be like the garment with which he clothes himself;
like a belt which he wears all the time.
20 May this be the way in which the Lord will reward my accusers,
and those who malign me.
21 For Your part, Lord God,
work on my behalf for the sake of Your reputation;
rescue me in Your gracious kindness,
22 for I am destitute and needy,
and my spirits are flagging.
23 I am fading away like an evening shadow;
I am shaken off like a locust.
24 My knees wobble from fasting;
my body has become lean and gaunt.
25 I have become disreputable to them;
when they see me they nod their heads
26 Come to my aid, Lord God;
liberate me for the sake of Your loving mercy,
27 that they may recognize this as Your doing,
and that You, Lord, have accomplished this.
28 They may curse; You bestow blessing.
When they assail, they will be humiliated,
While Your servant will be happy.
29 Let my accusers be covered with dishonor;
may they clothe themselves in their garment of shame.
30 I will give the Lord great praise,
and honor him in the presence of large crowds.
31 For He stands side by side with the destitute,
to rescue him from those who would condemn him.

Psalm 110

1 The Lord said to my Lord,
"Sit on My right, until I subdue your enemies completely."
2 The Lord dispatches from Zion your mighty scepter;
exercise sovereignty with it among your enemies.

3 The people will proffer their assistance willingly
on the day when you muster your army in holy array at early dawn;
the flower of your young manhood is at your disposal.
4 The Lord has sworn, and will not recant:
"You shall be a priest to all eternity,
according to the order of Melchizedek."
5 The Lord is at your right hand;
He will crush kings when His anger burns.
6 He will dispense judgment to the nations;
there will be a glut of corpses.
7 He will refresh Himself from a wayside stream;
so He will become dominant.

Psalm 111

1 May God be praised.
I will praise the Lord with all my heart,
in the conclave of the virtuous, and in the assembly.
2 The doings of the Lord are renowned;
they are worthy of consideration by all who delight in them.
3 His work is glorious and majestic,
and His equity is of permanent duration.
4 He has established a memorial for Himself
on account of His wonderful deeds;
the Lord is gracious and sympathetic.
5 He has provided food for those who revere Him;
He will remember His covenant perpetually.
6 He has displayed His powerful works to His people
in giving them nations for an inheritance.
7 Truth and justice are typical of Him;
all His enactments are reliable.
8 They are established for eternity,
being formulated in equity and truth.
9 He brought about the redemption of His people:
He has ordained His covenant eternally;
His name is sacred and august.
10 Wisdom begins with reverence for the Lord.
All who practise it possess commendable discernment;
His praise is of eternal duration.

Psalm 112

1 May God be praised.
The man is happy indeed who reveres the Lord,
and finds great joy in His commandments.
2 His offspring shall be renowned in the land;
the posterity of the virtuous will be blessed.
3 Wealth and riches are in his house;
his good fortune is unfailing.
4 To the virtuous he shines like a light in the darkness,
gracious, sympathetic and righteous.
5 It will go well for the liberal man who makes loans,
and conducts his business fairly.
6 For he will never be dispossessed;
the upright man will be remembered eternally.
7 He will not be alarmed by disquieting news;
his mind is trusting resolutely in the Lord.
8 His spirits are firmly upheld;
he will be fearless, until the time comes when he will
gloat over his enemies.
9 He has made liberal donations, and given to the poor;
his prosperity is unfailing.
His power will be augmented with honor.
10 The wicked man will observe this, and become irritated.
He will grind his teeth and be eaten up with jealousy;
the expectation of the wicked will be frustrated.

Psalm 113

1 May God be praised.
Give praise, you servants of the Lord,
praise the name of the Lord.
2 Let the name of the Lord be blessed
now and forever.
3 From the rising of the sun to its setting,
may the name of the Lord be praised.
4 The Lord is supreme over all nations;
His glory transcends the skies.
5 Who is the equal of the Lord our God,
enthroned above,

6 yet directing His gaze downwards
on heaven and earth alike?
7 He raises up the poor from the dust,
and lifts the destitute from utter degradation
8 to make him sit beside princes,
with the nobility of his people.
9 He establishes the childless woman in her house
as a happy mother of children.
May God be praised.

Psalm 114

1 When Israel withdrew from Egypt,
and the house of Jacob left a barbarous people,
2 Judah became His holy nation,
and Israel His dominion.
3 The sea looked, and receded;
Jordan turned back.
4 Mountains skipped like rams,
and hills like lambs.
5 Whatever made you recede, sea?
Why did you turn back, Jordan?
6 You mountains, that you hopped about like rams,
and you hills like lambs?
7 Tremble, earth, at the presence of the Lord,
when the God of Jacob appears,
8 Who transformed rock into a pool of water;
the flint rock into a gushing spring.

Psalm 115

1 Do not give us credit, Lord;
enhance Your own reputation instead,
because of Your loving mercy and faithfulness.
2 Why should pagan nations say,
"Where is their God now?"
3 Our God is in the heavens;
He does whatever He pleases.
4 Their idols are of silver and gold,
the product of human design.

5 Though they have a mouth, they make no sound;
they have eyes, but cannot see.
6 They possess ears, but are deaf;
and noses, but they cannot smell.
7 They have hands, but they do not feel,
and feet, but they cannot walk.
They do not articulate with their throats.
8 Those who manufacture them are like them,
as is every one who puts his trust in them.
9 Trust in the Lord, you Israelites;
He is their help and protection.
10 Trust in the Lord, house of Aaron;
He is their help and their protection.
11 You who revere the Lord, trust in the Lord;
He is their help and their protection.
12 The Lord has remembered us: He will bless us.
He will bestow blessings on the house of Israel,
and will favor the house of Aaron.
13 He will bless those who revere the Lord,
insignificant and prominent alike.
14 May the Lord give you continual prosperity,
both for you and your children.
15 May you be blessed by the Lord
who formed heaven and earth.
16 The heavens are the Lord's own,
but He has allotted the earth for human society.
17 It is not the dead who praise the Lord,
nor all those who pass away into oblivion.
18 But we will bless the Lord
from this time forward, and forever.
May God be praised.

Psalm 116

1 I am devoted to the Lord,
because He has listened to my supplicating voice.
2 He pays attention to me;
therefore I will entreat Him while life lasts.

3 The cords of death entwined around me,
the agonies of hell came upon me.
I was distressed and anguished.
4 Then in the name of the Lord I cried,
"I beg of You to deliver me, Lord."
5 The Lord is gracious and just,
and our God is sympathetic.
6 The Lord protects the innocent.
When I was languishing, He rescued me.
7 Regain your composure, my soul,
for the Lord has treated you kindly.
8 You have liberated me from death,
my eyes from weeping, my feet from tottering.
9 I will conduct myself in a godly manner
in the midst of human society.
10 I have no confidence in what I say;
I suffered very greatly.
11 I said in my bewilderment,
"Everyone is unreliable."
12 What can I offer to the Lord
in payment for all His kindness to me?
13 I will offer a libation for my deliverance,
and in the name of the Lord I will make my entreaty.
14 I will discharge my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all His people.
15 The death of His faithful servants
is an important consideration with the Lord.
16 I am Your follower, Lord,
Your servant, Your true offspring.
You have slackened my bonds.
17 I will make a sacrificial thank-offering to You;
I will pray in the name of the Lord.
18 I will discharge my vows to the Lord
in the presence of all His people,
19 in the precincts of the Divine abode,
in your midst, Jerusalem.
May God be praised.

Psalm 117

1 Give the Lord praise, all you nations,
extol Him, all you peoples.
2 For His divine mercy to us has been limitless;
the fidelity of the Lord is eternal.
May God be praised.

Psalm 118

1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good;
His loving mercy is everlasting.
2 Let Israel declare
that His mercy is eternal.
3 Let the house of Aaron assert
that His mercy is eternal.
4 Let those who revere the Lord affirm
that His mercy is eternal.
5 When I petitioned the Lord
in an awkward situation,
He answered me and liberated me.
6 The Lord is with me;
I am not afraid of what man may do to me.
7 With the Lord as my help,
I shall witness the downfall of those who hate me.
8 It is better to look to the Lord for shelter
than to trust in mankind.
9 It is more advantageous to take refuge in the Lord
than to place confidence in princes.
10 All the nations have surrounded me,
but I will destroy them in the name of the Lord.
11 They have all gathered around me, hemming me in;
I will destroy them in the name of the Lord.
12 They swarmed around me like bees;
they blazed up like a fire among thorns.
I will destroy them in the name of the Lord.
13 I was hard pressed, and on the point of collapse,
but the Lord assisted me.
14 The Lord is my strength and my song,
and He has become my rescuer.

15 Listen to the joyful shout of victory
where the upright are living.
The power of the Lord has brought success.
16 The might of the Lord is greatly praised;
the resources of the Lord have ushered in victory.
17 I shall not die,
but will survive to tell of the Lord's doings.
18 The Lord has corrected me sternly,
but He has not abandoned me to destruction.
19 Open the noble gates to me,
that I may pass through them to give thanks to the Lord.
20 This is the gate of the Lord,
through which the upright may pass.
21 I am thanking You because You have answered me,
and have become my liberator.
22 The stone which the builders deemed unsuitable
has become the cornerstone.
23 This has been done by the Lord;
in our judgment it is a marvelous thing.
24 This is the day which the Lord has made:
let us rejoice and be happy in it.
25 Help me, Lord, I beg:
give me success, I pray, Lord.
26 He who approaches in the name of the Lord is blessed;
we invoke favor on you from the divine abode.
27 The Lord is God, and He has enlightened us;
marshal the festive procession,
bearing shady boughs up to the ornamented altar.
28 You are my God, and I will praise You:
I will give You great prominence, my God.
29 Give the Lord thanks, for He is good:
His loving mercy is everlasting.

Psalm 119

1 Happy are those whose conduct is beyond reproach,
who are living according to the law of the Lord.
2 Happy are those who observe His injunctions,
and search for Him with their whole being.

3 Who in addition commit no injustices,
but live according to the divine pattern.
4 You Yourself have commanded us
to observe Your injuctions rigidly.
5 Would that my life's course were set
so as to keep Your decrees.
6 Then I would not endure humiliation
because I have attended to all Your statutes.
7 I will thank You with a sincere heart
when I learn Your equitable laws.
8 I will observe Your precepts carefully;
do not forsake me entirely.

* * *

9 How can a young man live a clean life?
Only by paying attention to what You say.
10 With my entire being I searched for You;
do not let me stray from Your commandments.
11 My mind treasures what You say,
that I might not sin against You.
12 You are blessed, Lord;
teach me Your decrees.
13 I have talked forthrightly
of all Your spoken judgments.
14 I am happier in following Your injunctions
than in every possible form of wealth.
15 I will meditate on Your teachings,
and give attention to Your purposes.
16 I find happiness in Your statutes;
I will not forget what You have enjoined.

* * *

17 Be generous to Your servant, that I may survive,
and may observe Your commands.
18 Give me discernment,
that I may notice wonderful things in Your law.
19 I am a mere stranger on earth;
do not conceal Your commandments from me.
20 I yearn desperately
for Your ordinances at all times.
21 You rebuke the overbearing;
those who wander from Your decrees are accursed.

22 Banish disgrace and contempt from me,
for I have observed Your commandments.
23 Though princes should sit and conspire against me,
Your servants will continue to meditate upon Your statutes.
24 Your injunctions are my joy;
they are my counsellors.

* *

25 I lie prone in the dust;
revive me according to Your promise.
26 I have described my plight to You, and You answered me;
teach me Your statutes.
27 Help me to discern the inner meaning of Your teachings,
and I will meditate upon Your wonders.
28 I am weeping in my sorrow:
sustain me according to Your promise.
29 Banish false courses of action from me,
and graciously give me Your law.
30 I have chosen the true way;
I have set Your precepts before me.
31 I cling to Your ordinances, Lord;
do not let me be disgraced.
32 I will follow Your pattern for living,
for You give me increasing discernment.

* * *

33 Instruct me in the meaning of Your statutes, Lord,
that I may observe them continually.
34 Give me understanding, that I may keep Your law,
and I will adhere to it wholeheartedly.
35 Guide me along by Your commandments,
for in this way I find happiness.
36 Turn my mind in the direction of Your injunctions,
and not towards money-making.
37 Avert my eyes from unreality;
uphold me in Your true principles.
38 Confirm Your promise to Your servant,
which is given to all who revere You.
39 Ward off the disgrace which I dread,
for Your laws are good.
40 See, I have yearned for Your precepts;
revive me by means of Your righteousness.

41 May your merciful love come to me, Lord,
and Your deliverance, according to Your promise.
42 Then I shall have a ready reply for those who mock me;
I am trusting in Your promise.
43 Do not silence my witness to the truth completely,
for I have implicit trust in Your decisions.
44 I will keep Your law
continually, eternally,
45 and I will live an unrestricted existence,
because I have searched hard for Your statutes.
46 I will speak of Your decrees before monarchs,
and will not be ashamed;
47 for I find my happiness in Your commandments,
and I cherish them.
48 I will raise my hands in reverence for Your statutes which I
treasure,
and I will meditate on Your laws.

* *

49 Remember the promise which You made to Your servant,
upon which I am placing my trust.
50 This is my solace in my trouble:
Your assurance sustains me.
51 The arrogant deride me wilfully,
but I have not relinquished Your law.
52 I recalled Your decrees of former days, Lord,
and I am comforted.
53 Furious anger sweeps over me,
because of the wicked who denounce Your law.
54 Your decrees have been my song
in my pilgrim dwelling.
55 I call Your name to mind in the night, Lord,
and keep Your law.
56 I have this consolation,
that I observe Your precepts.

* * *

57 The Lord is my destiny;
I have promised to keep Your teachings.
58 I ask you earnestly, with all my being,
be kind to me, as You have promised.

59 I have pondered on my behavior,
and moved in the direction of Your commandments.
60 I hurried, and made no delay
in observing Your injunctions.
61 The snares of evildoers have trapped me,
but I have not forgotten Your law.
62 At dead of night I rise to thank You,
because of Your impartial judgments.
63 I associate with all those who revere You,
and who observe Your precepts.
64 The earth is replete with Your mercy, Lord;
teach me your statutes.

* * *

65 You have been very kind to Your servant, Lord,
according to Your promise.
66 Teach me discernment and knowledge,
for I have believed Your commandments.
67 Until affliction came, I went astray;
but now I observe Your sayings.
68 You are good and beneficent;
teach me Your statutes.
69 The arrogant have fabricated lies against me,
but I keep Your precepts wholeheartedly.
70 Their minds are stupid and impenitent,
but I find joy indeed in Your law.
71 It is a good thing that I was afflicted,
so that I could learn Your statutes.
72 Your decrees are more valuable to me
than gold and silver in abundance.

* * *

73 Your power has moulded me and established me;
give me understanding, that I may learn Your precepts.
74 Let those who revere You see me and rejoice,
because I had confidence in Your promise.
75 I realize, Lord, that Your judgments are fair,
and that You have afflicted me with the best of intentions.
76 But now let Your mercy console me,
according to what You promised Your servant.
77 Show some sympathy towards me, that I may survive,
for Your law is my happiness.

78 Let the arrogant be humiliated
because they have behaved deceitfully towards me.
As far as I am concerned,
I will meditate on Your statutes.
79 Let those who revere You turn towards me,
with those who know Your commandments.
80 May I adhere wholeheartedly to Your precepts,
so that I shall not be disgraced.

* * *

81 I yearn for Your salvation;
I hopefully await Your summons.
82 My sight is failing through watching for Your promise,
saying, "When will you console me?"
83 I have become like a wineskin cured by smoke,
but still I do not forget Your principles.
84 How much longer will Your servant have to wait?
When will You prosecute those who afflict me?
85 The overbearing, who violate Your law,
have set traps for me.
86 All Your injunctions are reliable:
they persecute me unjustly,
come to my assistance.
87 They have very nearly terminated my earthly life,
yet I have not neglected Your injunctions.
88 Sustain me in Your loving kindness,
that I may keep Your decrees.

* * *

89 Your cause, Lord,
is established permanently in the heavens.
90 Your fidelity continues throughout the ages;
You have stabilized the earth, and it is firm.
91 To this day things are placed under the control of Your laws,
for everything is subservient to You.
92 If Your law had not been my source of happiness,
I should long ago have been engulfed by my miseries.
93 I will never forget Your principles,
for through them You have kept me alive.
94 I belong to you; rescue me,
for I have looked carefully for Your commands.

95 Wrongdoers lie in ambush to destroy me;
I will meditate on Your decrees.
96 I have observed that perfection has its limits,
but Your law is boundless.

* * *

97 How I love Your law:
all day long I meditate on it.
98 Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies;
for it is with me continually.
99 I am more discerning than all my instructors,
for I meditate on Your injunctions.
100 I possess more understanding than the aged,
because I observe Your principles.
101 I have withdrawn from every evil course of action,
so as to observe Your commands.
102 I have not swerved from Your ordinances,
for You Yourself are my teacher.
103 How delectable Your promises are to my taste:
they are sweeter than honey in my mouth.
104 I shall acquire discernment through Your precepts;
for this reason I detest wicked behavior.

* * *

105 The things which You say are like a lamp at my feet,
a light for my journeying.
106 I have vowed in full resolve
to keep Your just judgments.
107 I am greatly afflicted:
revive me, Lord, in accordance with Your promise.
108 Of Your graciousness, Lord,
accept my offerings of praise,
and teach me Your decrees.
109 I carry my life in my hands continually;
yet I do not forget Your law.
110 Wrongdoers have set a trap for me,
but I have not strayed from Your injunctions.
111 Your decrees are my heritage for ever:
they are my heart's delight.
112 I have set myself to perform Your statutes continually,
from this time on.

113 I detest people of uncertain allegiance,
but I cherish Your law.
114 You are my shelter and my protection;
I have complete confidence in Your promise.
115 Leave me alone, you workers of evil,
that I may keep the commandment of my God.
116 Sustain me according to Your assurance, that I may live;
do not let me be disappointed in my trust.
117 Support me, and I shall be safe,
and let me contemplate Your decrees continually.
118 You regard with contempt
all who deviate from Your commandments,
for their cunning is of no avail.
119 You cast aside all the wicked on earth like rubbish;
for this reason I cherish Your decrees.
120 My flesh creeps for fear of You,
and I am awed by Your judgments.

* * *

121 I have done what is right and proper;
do not abandon me to my oppressors.
122 Give your servant comforting assurance;
do not let the overbearing tyrannize me.
123 My eyes are ruined through looking for Your liberation,
and for Your promised justice.
124 Treat Your servant in accordance with Your mercy,
and teach me Your decrees.
125 I am Your servant; give me discernment,
that I may know Your commandments.
126 It is time for the Lord to act:
they have violated Your law.
127 Therefore I cherish Your commandments more than gold,
more than refined gold.
128 So I avow that all Your precepts are good;
I detest dishonest ways.

* * *

129 Your commandments are wonderful:
for this reason I observe them.
130 The unfolding of Your sayings clarifies them,
and gives understanding to the unprejudiced.

131 With gaping mouth I pant
with longing for Your decrees.
132 Pay attention to me, be kind to me,
as is only right for those who love You.
133 Direct my behavior by Your principles:
do not allow evil to gain control of me.
134 Rescue me from human oppression,
that I may observe Your precepts.
135 Bestow divine radiance upon Your servant,
and teach me Your decrees.
136 My eyes are streaming with tears,
because people do not observe Your law.

* * *

137 You, Lord, are just:
Your judgments are fair.
138 You have ordered Your laws impartially,
and in all fidelity.
139 My enthusiasm devours me,
because my enemies forget Your injunctions
140 Your promise has been tried to the limit,
and Your servant cherishes it.
141 I am lowly, and regarded with contempt;
yet I have not forgotten Your precepts.
142 Your justice is of an eternal kind,
and Your law is truth itself.
143 Hardship and difficulty befall me;
yet I find joy in Your commandments.
144 Your injunctions are eternally righteous;
give me discernment and I shall survive.

* * *

145 I have entreated with my whole being,
answer me, Lord,
I will observe Your decrees.
146 I implore You to save me,
that I may keep Your enactments.
147 I rise at dawn to beg Your assistance;
I am trusting in Your promises.
148 I keep awake all through the night,
so as to meditate on your utterances.

149 In Your mercy pay attention to my entreaty;
revive me, Lord, according to Your decree.
150 My malicious persecutors are near me:
they are far removed from Your law.
151 But You, Lord, are near by,
and all Your commandments are reliable.
152 I learned long ago from Your injunctions,
that You have established them for ever.

* * *

153 Take notice of my afflictions, and rescue me,
for I have not forgotten Your law.
154 Plead my cause, and give me retribution;
revive me, as You have promised.
155 Salvation is far removed from wrongdoers,
because they have not followed Your laws.
156 Your mercy, Lord, is limitless;
revive me, according to Your just nature.
157 My adversaries and persecutors are numerous,
yet I have not digressed from Your injunctions.
158 I observe apostates with disgust,
because they do not keep Your commandments.
159 Bear in mind how much I revere Your principles;
restore me, Lord, according to Your mercy.
160 Your sayings are supremely true,
and all Your impartial judgments survive eternally.

* * *

161 Though princes have persecuted me wantonly,
I hold Your utterances in respect.
162 I am overjoyed at Your promise,
like one who discovers a hoard of treasure.
163 I hate and detest lying,
but I cherish Your law.
164 Seven times daily I praise You,
because of Your impartial judgments.
165 Those who love Your law experience great peace;
no obstacle can cause them to stumble.
166 I am looking to You for liberation;
I am observing Your decrees.

167 I have kept Your enactments;
I cherish them dearly.
168 I observe Your principles and Your injunctions,
for all my behavior is evident to You.

* * *

169 Let my entreaty reach You, Lord:
give me discernment according to Your assurance.
170 May my petition come before You;
rescue me, as You have promised.
171 I will speak in commendation of You,
because You are teaching me Your statutes.
172 My tongue will proclaim Your assurance,
for all Your commandments are just.
173 Let Your power be on hand to assist me,
because I have made Your principles my choice.
174 I yearn for liberation, Lord,
Your law is my joy.
175 May I live to praise You,
and may Your enactments uphold me.
176 I have strayed like a roaming sheep;
search for Your servant,
for I have not forgotten Your commandments.

Psalm 120

1 I call to the Lord in my distress,
and He answers me,
2 Deliver me, Lord, from lying lips,
and from deceitful tongue.
3 What will he give you?
What more will he do to you, treacherous tongue?
4 He will inflict sharpened arrows of the warrior,
with glowing embers of the broom tree.
5 It is my misfortune that I have to live in Meshech,
and have my abode among the dwellings of Kedar.
6 I have lived far too long
among those who hate peace.
7 I myself uphold peace;
but when I say anything, they are anxious for war.

Psalm 121

1 I lift my gaze to the mountains;
from what quarter will help come?
2 My help comes from the Lord,
who created heaven and earth.
3 He will not allow your foot to trip;
your guardian never sleeps.
4 He who guards Israel
neither dozes nor sleeps.
5 The Lord is your protection:
the Lord is a ready shelter.
6 During the day the sun will not hurt you,
nor the moon at night.
7 The Lord will guard you from all evil;
He will protect your life.
8 The Lord will keep you secure as you come and go,
now and forever.

Psalm 122

1 I was happy when they said to me,
"Let us go to the shrine of the Lord."
2 We have set foot
within your portals, Jerusalem.
3 Jerusalem —
rebuilt as a compact city,
4 to which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord,
as was enacted for Israel,
to praise the name of the Lord.
5 For there were located seats of judgment,
the thrones of the Davidic house.
6 Pray that all may go well with Jerusalem:
those who love you will flourish.
7 May peace reside within your walls,
and prosperity in your palaces.
8 For the sake of my brothers and friends
I will say, "Peace be with you."
9 For the sake of the shrine of the Lord our God,
I will pray for your happiness.

Psalm 123

1 I lift my gaze to You,
enthroned in heaven.
2 As the eyes of servants notice the gestures of their masters,
as the attention of a maidservant is directed to her mistress,
so we look to the Lord our God,
until He shows us His mercy.
3 Take pity on us, Lord, take pity on us;
for we are swamped with contempt.
4 We are full to overflowing with the scorn of the indolent,
and with the disdain of the arrogant.

Psalm 124

1 "Had not the Lord been with us,"
let Israel say;
2 had not the Lord been on our side
when they rose up against us,
3 they would have swallowed us alive
in their burning fury.
4 Then the current would have swept us away,
the torrents would have engulfed us.
5 Then the turbulent waters
would have covered us.
6 May the Lord be blessed,
for not abandoning us as prey for them to devour.
7 We escaped like a bird from the snare of the poacher;
the noose is broken, and we have gone free.
8 We are helped by the power of the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 125

1 Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion:
immovable, permanently situated.
2 Jerusalem has mountains around her;
similarly, the Lord surrounds His people,
now and forever.

3 No evil power will be allowed to hold sway
over the land allotted to the virtuous;
so that the upright will not hanker after evil.
4 Prosper those who are good, Lord;
the ones who are morally upright.
5 As for those who become attracted to dishonest enterprises,
the Lord will lead them away along with the evildoers.
May peace rest upon Israel.

Psalm 126

1 When the Lord restores the fortunes of captive Zion,
it will be like being in a dream.
2 Our mouths will be full of laughter,
and our tongues with exclamations of joy.
They will be commenting among the nations,
"The Lord has worked wonders for them."
3 The Lord has done marvelously for us;
we are happy.
4 Change our captive state, Lord,
like torrents in the south.
5 Those who sow in tears
shall reap with joyful shouts.
6 He who goes out in tears carrying the seed,
will indeed return with cries of happiness,
carrying his sheaves.

Psalm 127

1 Unless the Lord builds the house,
those who erect it labor in vain.
Unless the Lord guards the city,
the watchman is alert to no purpose.
2 It is a waste of time for you to get up early,
and to go to bed late at night,
and eat hard-earned bread;
for He blesses His loved ones as they sleep.
3 Children are truly an inheritance from the Lord;
the offspring of the mother is reward indeed.

4 The sons of one's youth
are like arrows flourished by a warrior.
5 The person is happy who has a quiver full of them;
they will not feel humiliated when they dispute with their enemies in court.

Psalm 128

1 Happy indeed is everyone who reveres the Lord,
and conducts himself according to His stipulations.
2 You shall eat what your hands have produced:
you will be happy and prosperous.
3 Your wife will be like a prolific vine
in the recesses of your dwelling;
your children around your table
like olive-shoots.
4 This is the sort of blessing
which comes to the man who reverences the Lord.
5 May the Lord bless you from Zion;
may you see Jerusalem prosper all your life.
6 May you live to see your grandchildren.
Let peace rest upon Israel.

Psalm 129

1 "They have oppressed me dreadfully from my early days,"
Israel may well say;
2 "They have oppressed me dreadfully from my early days,
yet they have not overcome me.
3 "They have plowed over my prostrate form,
making long furrows like plowmen.
4 "But the Lord is just;
He has severed the bonds of the wicked.
5 "May all who hate Zion
be disgraced and dispersed.
6 "May they be like grass upon the rooftop,
which withers before it is plucked up.
7 With which the harvester does not fill his arms,
nor the embrace of the one who binds sheaves.

8 "The passers-by do not say to them,
'The blessing of the Lord rest upon you; we
bless you in the name of the Lord.' "

Psalm 130

1 In deep perplexity I entreat You, Lord;
2 hear my cry, Lord:
pay careful attention to my supplicating voice.
3 If You, Lord, were to record sin,
who could possibly survive, Lord?
4 But forgiveness is part of Your nature,
in order that You may be reverenced.
5 I am trusting in the Lord;
my whole being is confident.
I have faith in His promise.
6 I have greater hope in the Lord
than the watchmen who wait for the dawn;
more than the sentry who expects the morning light.
7 Let Israel trust in the Lord,
for in the Lord there is mercy to be found,
and an abundance of redemption.
8 For it is He who will ransom Israel
from all her sin.

Psalm 131

1 I am not arrogant in disposition, Lord;
my attitude is not that of pride,
neither do I meddle in matters too great or profound for me.
2 But I have calmed and soothed my spirit,
like a weaned child in its mother's care;
my soul is like a weaned infant.
3 Trust in the Lord, Israel,
from now and forever.

Psalm 132

1 For the sake of David,
call to mind, Lord, all those hardships which he underwent.

2 How he swore an oath to the Lord,
and made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:
3 "I will not enter my dwelling,
nor will I lie on my bed;
4 "I will not close my eyes in sleep,
nor let my eyelids slumber
5 "until I find a location for the Lord,
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob."
6 We heard of one in Ephrathah;
we discovered it on the property of Jaar.
7 Let us go to His abode;
let us do homage at His footstool.
8 Arise, Lord, and enter Your shrine,
You and Your mighty ark.
9 Let Your priests be adorned with righteousness;
let Your saints shout for joy.
10 For the sake of Your servant David,
do not reject Your anointed one.
11 The Lord swore to David an inviolable oath,
from which He will not retract:
"From the offspring of your body
I will set up a dynasty for you.
12 "If your successors will observe My covenant,
and My precepts which I shall teach them,
then their descendants also shall occupy your throne forever."
13 For the Lord has chosen Zion;
He desires it as His dwelling.
14 "This is my perpetual resting place;
here I will stay, for I have desired to do so.
15 "I will richly bless its produce,
and give bread in abundance to its poor.
16 I will clothe its priests with salvation,
and its saints shall shout for joy.
17 "I will make the power of David flourish in that place;
I have prepared great authority for My anointed one.
18 "I will cover his enemies with shame,
but his diadem will bring him renown."

Psalm 133

1 What a wonderful thing it is
when brothers live together in harmony.
2 It is like sweet-scented oil on the head,
running down on the beard,
Aaron's beard,
and dripping on to the neckband of his robes.
3 Like the dew of Hermon
which falls on the mountains of Zion,
when the Lord appointed in that place
the blessing of life eternal.

Psalm 134

1 Bless the Lord,
all you who are servants of the Lord:
who at night take your appointed places in the house of the Lord.
2 Raise your hands towards the shrine,
and bless the Lord.
3 May the Lord,
who formed heaven and earth,
bless you from Zion.

Psalm 135

1 May God be praised.
Praise the name of the Lord:
praise Him, you servants of the Lord.
2 You who take up your positions in the house of the Lord,
in the precincts of the abode of our God.
3 May God be praised.
The Lord is good: sing praise to His name,
for to do so is appropriate.
4 The Lord has selected Jacob as His own,
and Israel as His special prize.
5 I am well aware that the Lord is majestic,
and that our God is greater than all gods.
6 Whatever the Lord decides upon, He does,
whether it is in heaven or on earth,
in the seas, or in all the oceans.

7 He makes clouds rise from remote places on earth:
He causes lightning to flash amongst the rain clouds,
and produces the wind from its place of origin.
8 It was He who destroyed the firstborn of Egypt,
both human and animal.
9 He sent wonders and portents into the midst of Egypt,
against Pharaoh and all his followers.
10 He battered powerful nations,
and destroyed mighty monarchs:
11 Sihon, king of the Amorites,
Og, king of Bashan,
and all the Canaanite kingdoms.
12 He apportioned their land as an inheritance;
it became a heritage for His people Israel.
13 Your name is eternal, Lord;
Your renown, Lord, will exist through the ages.
14 For the Lord will secure justice for His people,
and will be sympathetic towards His followers.
15 The images of pagan nations are only silver and gold things,
the product of human design.
16 They have a mouth, but make no sound;
they have eyes, but they cannot see.
17 They possess ears, but they are deaf,
nor have they any breath in their mouths.
18 Those who manufacture them are like them;
as are all who have faith in them.
19 Bless the Lord, house of Israel;
bless the Lord, house of Aaron.
20 Bless the Lord, house of the Levites;
you who revere the Lord, bless the Lord.
21 May the Lord be blessed from Zion,
for He inhabits Jerusalem.
May God be praised.

Psalm 136

1 Give thanks to the Lord;
He is eternally constant.
2 Give thanks to the supreme God;
He is eternally constant.

3 Give thanks to the supreme Lord;
He is eternally constant.
4 To Him alone who works wonders;
He is eternally constant.
5 To Him who skillfully fashioned the heavens;
He is eternally constant.
6 To Him who spread out the earth over the waters;
He is eternally constant.
7 To Him who formed the great luminaries;
He is eternally constant.
8 The sun to control the day;
He is eternally constant.
9 The moon and the stars to govern the night;
He is eternally constant.
10 To Him who destroyed the firstborn of Egypt;
He is eternally constant.
11 And brought Israel out from them;
He is eternally constant.
12 With great might and protecting power;
He is eternally constant.
13 To Him who parted the Red Sea;
He is eternally constant.
14 And conducted Israel across;
He is eternally constant.
15 But tossed Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea;
He is eternally constant.
16 Who guided His people through the desert;
He is eternally constant.
17 To Him who killed powerful kings;
He is eternally constant.
18 And slew prominent monarchs;
He is eternally constant.
19 Sihon, king of the Amorites;
He is eternally constant.
20 And Og, king of Bashan;
He is eternally constant.
21 And gave their land as an inheritance;
He is eternally constant.

22 A possession to His servant Israel;
He is eternally constant.
23 Who remembered us when we were humiliated;
He is eternally constant.
24 And has released us from our oppressors;
He is eternally constant.
25 Who provides food for everyone;
He is eternally constant.
26 Give thanks to the God of heaven;
He is eternally constant.

Psalm 137

1 We lived by the Babylonian canals;
we were most sorrowful when we remembered Zion.
2 We hung our harps there,
on the willow trees.
3 For those who carried us captive
demanded songs from us there;
our tormentors required merriment of us, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion."
4 How can we sing the song of the Lord
in a foreign country?
5 If I forget you, Jerusalem,
may my right hand waste away.
6 May my tongue stick to my palate
if I do not remember you;
if I fail to cherish Jerusalem above all other happiness.
7 Remember, Lord, to the disadvantage of the Edomites,
the day when Jerusalem fell;
when they said,
"Strip it bare; raze it to its very foundations."
8 Offspring of Babylon,
devastator that you are;
the person will be blessed who recompenses you
for what you have done to us.
9 He will be blessed who seizes your children
and hurls them to destruction.

Psalm 138

1 I will thank You with my whole being:
in the presence of the deities I will loudly proclaim You.
2 I will do homage at Your holy temple,
and honor Your name for Your mercy and equity,
for You have exalted Your name and Your word above all else.
3 On the occasion when I called
You answered me,
and bolstered my morale greatly.
4 All the monarchs of the earth will praise You, Lord,
when they have heard Your spoken promises.
5 They will sing of the ways of the Lord,
that the glory of the Lord is great indeed.
6 For though the Lord is sublime,
He shows concern for the humble;
He recognizes the haughty from a distance.
7 Though I am living in an antagonistic society,
You are safeguarding my life;
You exert your strength against my violent enemies,
and Your power saves me.
8 The Lord will achieve His aim for me:
Your loving mercy, Lord, is of eternal duration.
Do not forsake Your handiwork.

Psalm 139

1 You have examined my motives, Lord,
and You are acquainted with me.
2 You know when I sit down and when I rise;
You are aware of my thoughts when scarcely formulated.
3 You have analyzed my habits of business and relaxation alike;
you are familiar with my entire behavior.
4 A word is scarcely uttered by my tongue
but what You, Lord, are completely aware of it.
5 You have provided for every possible contingency,
sustaining me by Your power.
6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is too deep. I cannot comprehend it.

7 To what place shall I withdraw from Your influence?
Where shall I retreat from Your presence?
8 If I ascend heavenward, You are there;
if I make my bed in hell, You are there also.
9 If I should fly on the wings of dawn,
to reside in the recesses of the deep,
10 Your power would guide me even there;
Your strength would uphold me.
11 Were I to say,
"Let darkness conceal me; and the light around me
become night,"
12 not even darkness would be too obscure for You:
the night is as bright as the day,
for darkness and light are both alike to You.
13 For You formed my bodily organs;
You created me in my mother's womb.
14 I am praising You because You are awe-inspiring and wonderful;
Your works are marvelous.
I am well aware of it.
15 My form was not concealed from You
when I was growing unobtrusively,
designed in deep obscurity.
16 You perceived my shapeless substance;
in Your record were assessed the days that were intended for me,
before they ever existed.
17 How immeasurable Your concepts are, my God,
how vast their total.
18 Were I to enumerate them,
they would outnumber the sands;
if I came to the end, I would still be with You.
19 If only You would slaughter the wicked, my God,
and rid me of the murderers.
20 Who defame You willfully,
and employ Your name evilly.
21 Do not I hate those who hate You, Lord?
Do not I detest those who rebel against You?
22 I abhor them with deep detestation;
I regard them as my enemies.

23 Examine me, my God; ascertain my motives.
Put me to the test, and find out what my thoughts are.
24 See if there is anything hurtful in my behavior,
and lead me along the way of eternity.

Psalm 140

1 Rescue me, Lord, from wicked men;
save me from violent people
2 who scheme evil in their minds,
and are continually stirring up strife.
3 They have a sharpened tongue like a snake:
beneath their lips is adder venom.
4 Protect me, Lord, from the power of the wicked:
save me from violent men
who have plotted to impede my progress.
5 The arrogant have laid a trap for me, and running nooses;
they have spread out a net by the wayside,
and have put down snares for me.
6 I say to the Lord,
"You are my God."
Pay attention, Lord, to my entreaty.
7 Lord God, my powerful deliverer,
You have afforded me protection in time of conflict.
8 Do not allow the desires of the wicked to be realized, Lord;
do not let their plans succeed.
9 Those who surround me are haughty in demeanor:
may their own malicious speech engulf them.
10 Let burning embers fall upon them:
may they be cast into deep graves from which they cannot emerge.
11 Do not allow the intriguer any room in the land;
may calamity hound down the oppressor quickly.
12 I am aware that the Lord
will see justice done for the oppressed,
and will uphold the cause of the needy.
13 The virtuous will certainly praise Your name;
the upright will live in Your presence.

Psalm 141

1 I am calling to you, Lord. Hurry to my assistance;
pay attention to my request when I entreat You.
2 May my prayer rise before You like incense;
may my uplifted hands be like an evening sacrifice.
3 Keep watch over my utterances, Lord;
make me cautious in what I say.
4 Do not let my mind hanker after evil,
to engage in wrongdoing with the wicked;
do not permit me to sample their pleasures.
5 Let the virtuous man strike me and rebuke me as a kindness;
it will be like oil for my head.
May I never be too proud to accept it,
for I am praying continually for them in their misfortune.
6 Their rulers have been tossed into the grave;
they will learn that the promise of the Lord is reliable.
7 Just as one penetrates and plows the ground,
so our bones lie scattered at the open grave.
8 But my gaze is directed to You, Lord God;
I am looking to You for shelter; do not expose me to danger.
9 Protect me from the trap which they have set for me,
and from the snares of the iniquitous.
10 May the wicked stumble into their own trap,
while I pass by unscathed.

Psalm 142

1 I am crying aloud to the Lord;
I am imploring the Lord earnestly.
2 I empty myself of grief in His presence,
and tell Him of my trouble.
3 When my spirits flag,
You are aware of the course of my life.
They set a trap for me
along the path I have to take.
4 Look at me, and take notice that I have no acquaintance;
my shelter is gone, no one is concerned about my life.

5 I cry to You, Lord:
I say, "You are my refuge, my destiny in human society."
6 Pay attention to my cry, for I am in desperate straits;
rescue me from my persecutors, for they are too powerful for me.
7 Bring me out of prison, that I may praise Your name:
the virtuous will flock round me when You reward me.

Psalm 143

1 Listen to my prayer, Lord,
pay attention to my entreaty.
Answer me because of Your fidelity and equity.
2 Do not summon Your servant for sentence,
for no man alive is righteous in Your estimation.
3 The enemy has pursued me,
he has trampled me to the ground:
he has made me inhabit the dismal regions of those who have been long dead.
4 In consequence my spirits have flagged,
I am full of apprehension.
5 I recall former days;
I ponder on all Your doings, and meditate upon Your handiwork.
6 I raise my hands to You:
I yearn for You like an arid land.
7 Answer me quickly, Lord, for my courage falters.
Do not conceal Yourself from me.
otherwise I shall be like those who have been buried.
8 Let me perceive Your graciousness quickly,
for I have faith in You;
show me the direction which I should take,
for I commit myself to You.
9 Deliver me from my enemies, Lord;
I am looking to You for shelter.
10 Teach me how to do Your will, for You are my God;
guide me by Your good spirit along a level path.
11 Save my life, Lord, for the sake of Your reputation;
in Your justice rescue me from trouble.

12 Annihilate my enemies out of love for me,
and destroy all my rivals,
because I am Your servant.

Psalm 144

1 May the Lord, my sure foundation, be praised:
He trains my hands for war, and my fingers for fighting.
2 He is my strong fortress, my shelter and my rescuer;
my protector, the one in whom I take refuge,
who brings peoples into submission to Himself.
3 What is man, Lord, that You take notice of him,
or human offspring, that You should show concern?
4 Man is like a puff of wind;
his days are like a flitting shadow.
5 Lower the cloud ceiling, Lord, and come down:
strike the mountains, so that they belch out smoke.
6 Hurl down Your lightning and disperse them;
shoot out Your thunderbolts and rout them.
7 Manifest Your power above:
rescue me and deliver me from the raging waters,
from the power of aliens,
8 whose mouths speak lies,
and whose hands transact treachery.
9 I will sing a new song to You, my God;
I will praise You on the ten-stringed harp.
10 You make kings victorious:
You delivered David Your servant from the cruel sword.
11 Free me and rescue me from the clutches of strangers
whose mouths speak lies,
and whose hands transact treachery.
12 May our sons be as plants
which develop quickly in their early stages:
may our daughters be like corner pillars
sculptured for a palace.
13 May our barns be full to overflowing
with every variety of produce;
may our sheep bear in our pastures
by thousands and ten thousands.

14 May our oxen be heavy with young,
experiencing neither abortion nor miscarriage.
May there be no disturbances in our city streets.
15 The people in such a condition are fortunate indeed:
happy are the people who have the Lord as their God.

Psalm 145

1 I will proclaim You loudly, my God and King,
and will bless Your name perpetually.
2 I will praise You daily,
and glorify Your name eternally.
3 The Lord is great, and merits the highest praise;
His grandeur is limitless.
4 They will praise Your works generation after generation,
and narrate Your mighty doings.
5 I will meditate on the glorious splendor of Your majesty,
and on Your wonderful deeds.
6 They will discuss the power which underlies Your miracles:
I will proclaim Your greatness.
7 They will tell what they recall of Your beneficence;
they will sing of Your righteousness.
8 The Lord is gracious and sympathetic,
patient, and extremely kind.
9 The Lord is good to everyone,
and His sympathy enfolds all His creatures.
10 All Your works will praise You, Lord;
Your saints will bless you.
11 They will tell of Your glorious kingdom,
and talk of Your power,
12 proclaiming to mankind Your wonderful works,
and the glorious resplendence of Your kingdom.
13 Your kingdom is of an eternal order:
Your rule extends across the ages.
14 The Lord sustains all those who fall;
He lifts up those who are prostrate with grief.
15 Everyone looks to you with expectation;
You give them their food at the appropriate time.
16 You are generous
in satisfying the wishes of every living thing.

17 The Lord is just in all His behavior,
and beneficent in all His dealings.
18 The Lord is near to all who entreat him,
to all who supplicate Him sincerely.
19 He will fulfil the wishes of those who revere Him:
He will hear their appealing cry, and will help them.
20 The Lord will protect all who love Him,
but He will destroy evildoers.
21 May I proclaim the glory of the Lord:
may all mankind bless His sacred name eternally.

Psalm 146

1 May God be praised.
Let my entire being praise the Lord.
2 I will glorify the Lord while life lasts;
I will sing praise to my God as long as I exist.
3 Do not put your trust in nobility;
mere mortals, who can be of no assistance.
4 When his spirit departs, he returns to dust;
on that very day his plans are terminated.
5 Happy indeed is the man who has the God of Jacob to help him;
who has pinned his faith on the Lord his God,
6 Who formed heaven and earth,
the sea, and all it contains;
who is eternally faithful,
7 Dispensing justice for the oppressed,
and giving food to the hungry.
8 The Lord releases the prisoners;
the Lord gives sight to the blind.
The Lord raises those who are prostrate;
the Lord cherishes the upright.
9 The Lord protects the stranger,
and sustains the orphan and widow;
but He frustrates the designs of the wicked.
10 The Lord will reign eternally;
He is your God, Zion, throughout the ages.
May God be praised.

Psalm 147

1 May God be praised.
It is appropriate to sing praise to our God,
for He is gracious, and joyful songs befit Him.
2 The Lord has rebuilt Jerusalem,
and assembled exiled Israel.
3 He heals the brokenhearted,
and bandages their wounds.
4 He ascertains the number of the stars;
to all of them He allots names.
5 Our Lord is great,
abounding in power,
limitless in His wisdom.
6 The Lord supports the humble,
but hurls the wicked to the ground.
7 Sing a song of gratitude to the Lord;
celebrate the praise of the Lord on the harp.
8 He covers the skies with clouds,
and prepares rain for the earth.
He causes the grass to sprout on the hillsides.
9 He provides food for the animals,
and for the young ravens when they caw.
10 He does not delight in sheer animal strength,
and finds no pleasure in human sinews.
11 For the Lord is gratified by those who revere Him,
and who trust in His loving mercy.
12 Praise the Lord, Jerusalem;
praise your God, Zion,
13 for He has given new life to the bolts of your gates;
He has prospered your offspring in your midst.
14 He makes your borders peaceable;
He satisfies you with the finest wheat.
15 He dispatches His decree to the earth:
His command speeds along quickly.
16 He sends snowflakes, light as fluff;
He sprinkles hoar frost like fine dust.
17 He showers down icicles in fragments;
who can withstand His cold?

18 When he gives the command, they melt;
when He whips up the wind, the waters flow.
19 He declared His promises to Jacob,
His enactments and decrees to Israel.
20 He has not behaved in this manner with any other nation,
nor are they aware of His ordinances.
May God be praised.

Psalm 148

1 May God be praised.
Praise the Lord from the skies;
glorify Him in the regions above.
2 Let all His angels praise Him;
commend Him, you who are His company.
3 Praise Him, sun and moon;
praise Him, all you twinkling stars.
4 Let the highest heavens give Him praise;
and the rain clouds which are in the skies.
5 Let them praise the name of the Lord,
for He gave command, and they were created,
6 and He established them permanently.
He formulated a law which they were to obey.
7 Praise the Lord from the earth,
you denizens of the deep, and all oceans;
8 fire and hail, snow and fog,
boisterous wind, fulfilling His command.
9 You mountains and all you hills,
you fruit trees, and all you cedars,
10 wild beasts and all cattle,
creeping things and flying birds.
11 Earthly monarchs and all nations;
princes, and all rulers of lands.
12 Young men and women,
old men and boys,
13 let all praise the name of the Lord;
for His name alone is greatly prominent.
His majesty transcends earth and heaven.
14 He has increased the authority of His people:
all His saints glorify him —

the people of Israel, His protected race.
May God be praised.

Psalm 149

1 May God be praised.
Sing a new song to the Lord;
sing praise to Him when the faithful are assembled.
2 Let Israel rejoice in her Maker;
let the sons of Zion be jubilant about their King.
3 Let them honor His name with dancing,
making music to Him with tambourine and harp.
4 For the Lord delights in His people;
He adorns the humble with triumph.
5 Let the saints rejoice gloriously;
let them shout for joy upon their couches,
6 with their mouths filled with praise for God,
and double-edged swords in their hands,
7 with which to wreak vengeance upon pagan nations,
and inflict punishment upon the peoples.
8 To take captive their kings in chains,
and their nobles in iron fetters.
9 To carry out on them the recorded judgment.
This is signal for His saints.
May God be praised.

Psalm 150

1 May God be praised.
Give praise to God in His shrine:
glorify Him in his majestic heaven.
2 Praise him for His mighty doings;
praise Him for his boundless greatness.
3 Praise Him with the blowing of the trumpet;
praise Him with the lyre and harp.
4 Praise Him with the tambourine and dance;
praise Him with strings and pipe.
5 Praise Him with quivering cymbals;
praise Him with clashing cymbals.
6 Let everything that breathes
praise the Lord.
May God be praised!

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